

THE BOYS OWN PAPER

Quicquid agunt pueri nostri farrago libelli.
CONTENTS.

The Middy and the Moors: an Algerine Story. By R. M. BALLANTYNE. (Illustrated)	225, 241, 257, 273
Edric the Norseman: A Tale of Adventure and Discovery. By J. F. HODGETTS. (Illustrated)	228, 244, 260, 276
Another Odd Boy	231
The Master of the Shell: A Public School Story. By TALBOT BAINES REED. (Illustrated)	232, 248, 264, 280
Wolf Hunting in Russia. By A. G. NASH	236
My Monkey Jane	238
Great Shipwrecks of the World	246
The Wild East. By the Rev. C. MERK	247, 287
The Sights of our Great Cities. (Illustrated)	251, 263
Through Central Asia. By Rev. HENRY LANSEDELL, D.D.	254, 27
Our Note Book	255, 271
Coltish Chronicles; or, The Boy's Own Pony. By CUTHBERT BRADLEY. (Illustrated)	268
The "Boy's Own" Home of Rest for Working Boys	271
The Death of Julius Cæsar	283
The School Bell. Song for Boys. (With Music)	284
Doings for Month	287
Chess. Correspondence. Poetry.	

Colored Frontispiece:
THE DEATH OF CÆSAR.

THE CONCISE IMPERIAL DICTIONARY

BASED ON THE GREAT

IMPERIAL ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

Opinions of the Press.

ENGLISH.

From THE ACADEMY :

It stands first—and by a long interval—among all the one-volume English dictionaries hitherto published.

From THE ATHENÆUM :

We can heartily recommend this neat and handy volume to all who want a copious and trustworthy English dictionary of moderate dimensions :

From THE SATURDAY REVIEW :

A highly creditable production.

From THE SPECTATOR :

It holds the "premier" place.

From THE BRITISH QUARTERLY REVIEW :

To those to whom *The Imperial Dictionary* is inaccessible, *The Concise Imperial Dictionary* will be a great boon.

From THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW :

This excellent dictionary will soon become a general favorite.

From THE GRAPHIC :

A model of careful condensation.

From THE BOOKSELLER :

It is one of the best printed books that has passed through our hands for a long time

From THE NORTH BRITISH DAILY MAIL.

The Imperial Dictionary must remain for many years the best dictionary of the English language. . . For all practical purposes *The Concise Imperial* will be found of infinitely more use than *The Imperial* itself.

From THE DAILY NEWS :

Its conciseness consists in its masterly arrangement of matter.

CANADIAN.

From THE GLOBE :

For what may be called a thoroughly reliable working dictionary, this *Concise Imperial* will be found to have no superior, we might indeed with safety say, no equal.

From THE MAIL :

It is undoubtedly the best popular dictionary of the English language published.

From THE WORLD :

We really think the publishers have at last brought out a dictionary that is a sensible dictionary . . . Most prepossessing, both externally and internally.

From THE WEEK :

We feel quite sure that for all practical purposes it will be found far more serviceable than any of the larger "unabridged" works.

From THE CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN :

The best and most convenient dictionary for reference we have seen.

From THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW :

We have no hesitation in characterizing this work on the whole as complete, scholarly, and recent.

From THE EVANGELICAL CHURCHMAN :

It is especially such a book as is suited to the wants of clergymen and teachers, and is in every way a cheap and excellent family dictionary.

From GRIP :

A work which should be on everybody's table.

From THE VARSITY :

We can heartily recommend it to our readers who are in need of a thoroughly modern authority on matters of orthography, orthoepy, etymology, and definition.

THE CONCISE IMPERIAL DICTIONARY

Beautifully and strongly bound in half morocco, will be sent by us, carefully packed and post-paid, to any address, on receipt of \$4.50; or in substantial cloth binding for \$3.25; or it may be had at the same rates from any respectable bookseller.

J. E. BRYANT & CO. - Publishers, Toronto.

THE "HENRY IRVING" Shakespeare NOW READY.

Vol. 1 of this new and unique edition of the illustrious dramatist's work, prepared under the direct supervision of his greatest living interpreter, HENRY IRVING, whose name it bears, and of the eminent Shakespearean scholar and critic, FRANK A. MARSHALL.

The distinctive features of this edition will be: (1) An Accurate Text, the Author's text being given entire, without garbling or mutilation. (2) Mr. Irving's Marks, which denote the parts to be omitted in acting. (3) The Introductions by Mr. Irving and Mr. Marshall, consisting of (a) THE LITERARY HISTORY of each Play; (b) ITS STAGE HISTORY; and (c) CRITICAL REMARKS on its subject, construction and characters. (4) The Notes, which are of two sorts: (a) FOOT NOTES, for the general reader; (b) LONGER AND MORE IMPORTANT NOTES, affixed to the end of each Play, for the Shakespearean scholar and student. (5) Biographical Accounts of the Historical Personages that are the foundation of Shakespeare's characters. (6) Translations of Foreign Words and Phrases occurring in the Plays. (7) Pronunciation of Words peculiarly used by Shakespeare. (8) Lists of Words found only in Single Plays. (9) Time Analyses, showing the probable period of time covered by each scene and act, and the length of any supposed intervals.

The Pictorial Illustrations of this edition have been drawn expressly for it by Gordon Browne, (son of the famous Hablot Browne) who has embodied the poet's creations with much freshness and vigor. They are the outcome of a special study of Shakespeare, carried on over a period of several years. They will consist of 37 Full Page Etchings, representing one of the more important scenes in each Play, and above 550 Designs placed in the text at the passages they illustrate. In further illustration, Sketch Maps will accompany certain of the Plays, showing the countries in which, and the chief places where, the action is supposed to occur.

This "Henry Irving" Edition of Shakespeare will be printed in SMALL QUARTO, on exquisite white English paper, with all the perfection of the typographer's art. It will be issued in 8 Volumes, and these will appear at intervals of about three months. The binding will be in three styles: Cloth Gilt, Half-Morocco Gilt, and Full-Morocco Gilt.

To the Art-loving People of Canada.

The expense incurred in bringing out a Canadian edition of this work is very considerable; but we confidently look to you for support and encouragement in our enterprise. You will please remember that The "Henry Irving" Shakespeare will be sold in Canada by subscription only. Our representatives will shortly have the honor of calling upon you personally and of soliciting your subscription. We bespeak for them on your part a courteous and considerate reception. Those desirous of obtaining further information will please send to us for Prospectuses and Press Notices.

J. E. BRYANT & Co., Publishers,
64 Bay St., Toronto.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/boysownpaper108unse>

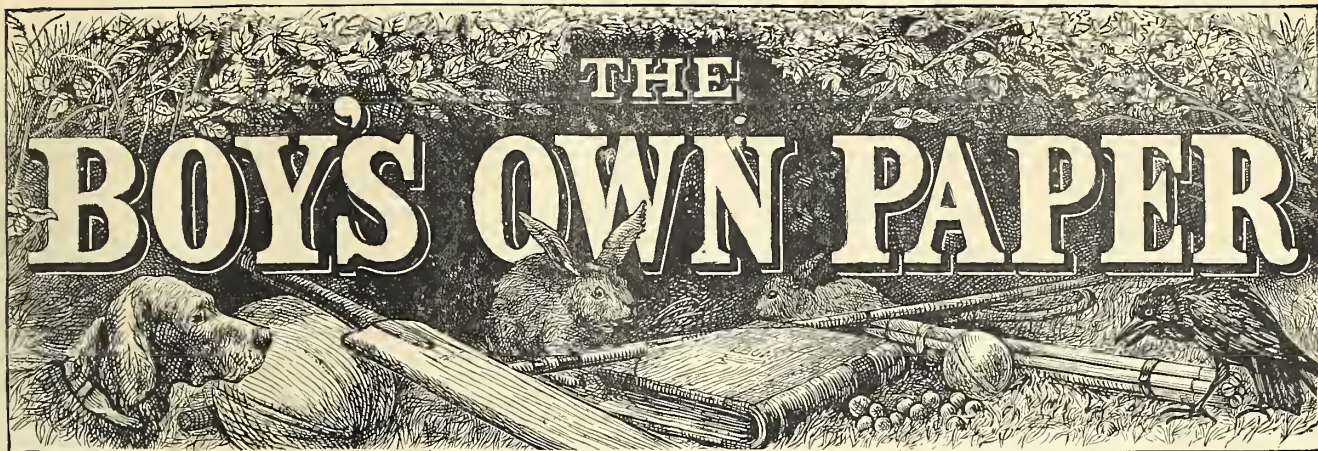


THE BOY'S OWN PAPER.]

DEATH OF CÆSAR.

From the celebrated Picture by GÉRÔME.

[56, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.



No. 469.—Vol. X.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1888.

Price One Penny.
[ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]



THE MIDDY AND THE MOORS :

AN ALGERINE STORY.

By R. M. BALLANTYNE,

Author of "The Prairie Chief," "Twice Bought,"
etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE HERO IS BLOWN AWAY, CAPTURED,
CRUSHED, COMFORTED, AND ASTONISHED.

ONE beautiful summer night, about the beginning of the present century, a young naval officer entered the public drawing-room of an hotel at Nice, and glanced round as if in search of some one.

"'Let go, and I will tell you,' gasped the youth."

Many people were assembled there—some in robust, others in delicate health, many in that condition which rendered it doubtful to which class they belonged, but all engaged in the quiet buzz of conversation which, in such a place, is apt to set in after dinner.

The young Englishman, for such he evidently was, soon observed an elderly lady beckoning to him at the other end of the *salon*, and was quickly seated between her and a fragile girl whose hand he gently took hold of.

"Mother," he said, to the elderly lady, "I'm going to have a row on the Mediterranean. The night is splendid, the air balmy, the stars gorgeous."

"Now, George," interrupted the girl with a little smile, "don't be flowery. We know all about that."

"Too bad," returned the youth, "I never rise to poetry in your presence, Minnie, without being snubbed. But you cannot cure me. Romance is too deeply ingrained in my soul. Poetry flows from me like—like anything! I am a midshipman in the British Navy, a position which affords scope for the wildest enthusiasm and—and—I'll astonish you yet, see if I don't."

"I am sure you will, dear boy," said his mother; and she believed that he would!

"Of course you will," added his sister; and she at least hoped that he would.

To say truth, there was nothing about the youth—as regards appearance or character—which rendered either the assurance or the hope unwarrantable. He was not tall, but he was strong and active. He was not exactly handsome, but he was possessed of a genial, hearty disposition, a playful spirit, and an earnest soul; also a modestly-reckless nature which was quite captivating.

"You won't be anxious about me, mother, if I don't return till pretty late," he said, rising. "I want a good long, refreshing pull, but I'll be back in time to say good night to you, Minnie, before you go to sleep."

"Your leave expires on Thursday, mind," said his sister; "we cannot spare you long."

"I shall be back in good time, trust me. *Au revoir*," he said, with a pleasant nod, as he left the room.

And they did trust him; for our midshipman, George Foster, was trustworthy; but those "circumstances" over which people have "no control" are troublesome derangers of the affairs of man. That was the last the mother and sister saw of George for the space of nearly two years!

Taking his way to the pebbly shore, young Foster hired a small boat, or punt, from a man who knew him well, declined the owner's services, pushed off, seized the oars, and rowed swiftly out to sea. It was, as he had said, a splendid night. The stars bespangled the sky like diamond-dust. The water was as clear as a mirror, and the lights of Nice seemed to shoot far down into its depths. The hum of the city came off with ever-deepening softness as the distance from the shore increased. The occasional sound of oars was heard not far off, though boats and rowers were invisible, for there was no moon, and the night was dark notwithstanding the starlight.

There was no fear, however, of the young sailor losing himself while the city lights formed such a glorious beacon astern.

After pulling steadily for an hour or more he rested on his oars, gazed up at the bright heavens, and then at the land lights, which by that time resembled a twinkling line on the horizon. "Must 'bout ship now," he muttered. "Wor't do to keep Minnie waiting."

As he rowed landward leisurely a sudden gust of wind from the shore shivered the liquid mirror into fragments. It was the advance-guard of a squall which in a few minutes rushed down from the mountains of the Riviera and swept out upon the darkening sea.

Young Foster, as we have said, was strong. He was noted among his fellows as a splendid oarsman. The squall, therefore, did not disconcert him, though it checked his speed greatly. After one or two hulls the wind increased to a gale, and in half an hour the youth found, with some anxiety, that he was making no headway against it.

The shore at that point was so much of a straight line as to render the hope of being able to slant in a faint one. As it was better, however, to attempt that than to row straight in the teeth of the gale, he diverged towards a point a little to the eastward of the port of Nice, and succeeded in making better way through the water, though he made no perceptible approach to land.

"Pooh! It's only a squall—he over in a minute," said the middy, by way of encouraging himself, as he glanced over his shoulder at the flickering lights, which were now barely visible.

He was wrong. The gale increased. Next time he glanced over his shoulder the lights were gone. Dark clouds were gathering up from the northward, and a short jabble of sea was rising which occasionally sent a spurt of spray inboard. Feeling now that his only chance of regaining the shore lay in a strong, steady, persevering pull straight towards it, he once more turned the bow of the little boat into the wind's eye and gave way with a will.

But what could human muscle and human will, however powerful, do against a rampant nor'wester? Very soon our hero was forced to rest upon his oars from sheer exhaustion, while his boat drifted slowly out to sea. Then the thought of his mother and Minnie flashed upon him, and, with a sudden gush, as it were, of renewed strength he resumed his efforts, and strained his powers to the uttermost—but all in vain.

Something akin to despair now seized on him, for the alternative was to drift out into the open sea, where no friendly island lay between him and the shores of Africa. The necessity for active exertion, however, gave him no time either to rest or think. As the distance from land increased the seas rose higher, and broke so frequently over the boat that it began to fill. To stop rowing—at least, to the extent of keeping the bow to the wind—would have risked turning broadside-on, and being overturned or swamped; there was nothing, therefore, to be done in the circumstances except to keep the boat's head to the wind and drift.

In the midst of the rushing gale and surging seas he sat there, every gleam of hope almost extinguished, when there came to his mind a brief passage from the Bible—"Hope thou in God." Many a time had his mother tried, in days gone by, to impress that text on his mind, but apparently without success. Now it arose before him like a beacon-star. At the same time he thought of the possibility that he might be seen and picked up by a passing vessel.

He could not but feel, however, that the chances of this latter event occurring were small indeed, for a passing ship or boat would not only be going at great speed, but would be very unlikely to see his cockleshell in the darkness, or to hear his cry in the roaring gale. Still he grasped that hope as the drowning man is said to clutch at a straw.

And the hope was quickly fulfilled, for scarcely had another half hour elapsed when he observed a sail—the high-peaked sail peculiar to some Mediterranean craft—rise, ghost-like, out of the driving foam and spray. The vessel was making almost straight for him; he knew that it would pass before there could be time to heave a rope. At the risk of being run down he rowed the punt in front of it, as if courting destruction, but at the same time guided his little craft so skilfully that it passed close to leeward, where the vessel's bulwarks were dipping into the water. Our middy's aim was so exact that the vessel only grazed the boat as it flew past. In that moment young Foster sprang with the agility of a cat, capsize the boat with the impulse, caught the bulwarks and rigging of the vessel, and in another moment stood panting on her deck.

"Hallo! Neptune, what do *you* want here?" cried a gruff voice at Foster's elbows. At the same time a powerful hand grasped his throat, and a lantern was thrust in his face.

"Let go, and I will tell you," gasped the youth, restraining his indignation at such unnecessary violence.

The grasp tightened, however, instead of relaxing.

"Speak out, baby-face," roared the voice, referring, in the latter expression, no doubt, to our hero's juvenility.

Instead of speaking out, George Foster hit out, and the voice with the lantern went down into the lee scuppers!

Then, the glare of the lantern being removed from his eyes, George saw, by the light of the binnacle lamp, that his adversary, a savage-looking Turk—at least in dress—was gathering himself up for a rush, and that the steersman, a huge negro, was grinning from ear to ear.

"Go below!" said a deep stern voice in the Arabic tongue.

The effect of this order was to cause the Turk with the broken lantern to change his mind, and retire with humility, while it solemnised the negro steersman's face almost miraculously.

The speaker was the captain of the vessel; a man of grave demeanour, herculean mould, and clothed in picturesque Eastern costume. Turning with quiet politeness to Foster, he asked him in broken French how he had come on board.

The youth explained in French quite as much broken as that of his interrogator.

"D'you speak English?" he added.

To this the captain replied in English still more shattered than the French, that he could "a ver leetil," but that as he (the youth) was a prisoner, there would be no occasion for speech at all, the proper attitude of a prisoner being that of absolute silence and obedience to orders.

"A prisoner!" ejaculated Foster, on recovering from the first shock of surprise. "Do you know that I am an officer in the Navy of his Majesty the King of Great Britain?"

A gleam of satisfaction lighted up the swarthy features of the Turk for a moment, as he replied,

"Ver goot. Ransom all de more greater."

As he spoke, a call from the look-out at the bow of the vessel induced him to hurry forward.

At the same instant a slight hissing sound caused Foster to turn to the steersman, whose black face was alive with intelligence, while an indescribable hitch up of his chin seemed to beckon the youth to approach with caution.

Foster perceived at once that the man wished his communication, whatever it was, to be unobserved by any one; he therefore moved towards him as if merely to glance at the compass.

"Massa," said the negro, without looking at Foster or changing a muscle of his now-stolid visage, "you 's in a drefle fix. Dis yer am a pirit. But I's not a pirit, bress you. I's wuss nor dat: I's a awful hyperkrite! an' I wants to give you good advice. Wotiver you doos *don't resist*. You'll on'y git whacked if you do."

"Thank you, Sambo. But what if I do resist in spite of being whacked?"

"Den you bery soon change your mind, das all. Moreober, my name's not Sambo. It am Peter de Great."

As he said so Peter the Great drew himself up to his full height, and he drew himself up to six feet four when he did that!

The captain coming aft at that moment put an abrupt end to the conversation. Two powerful Moorish seamen accompanied him. These, without uttering a word, seized Foster by the arms. In the strength of his indignation our middy was on the point of commencing a tremendous struggle, when Peter the Great's "*don't resist*," and the emphasis with which it had been spoken, came to mind, and he suddenly gave in. His hands were tied behind his back, and he was led down into a small, dimly-lighted cabin, where, being permitted to sit down on a locker, he was left to his own reflections.

These were by no means agreeable, as may well be supposed, for he now knew that he had fallen into the hands of those pests, the Algerine pirates, who at that time infested the Mediterranean.

With the thoughtlessness of youth Foster had never troubled his mind much about the piratical city of Algiers. Of course he knew that it was a stronghold on the northern coast of Africa, inhabited by Moorish rascals, who, taking advantage of their position, issued

from their port and pounced upon the merchantmen that entered the Mediterranean, confiscating their cargoes and enslaving their crews and passengers, or holding them to ransom. He also knew, or had heard, that some of the great maritime powers paid subsidies to the Dey of Algiers to allow the vessels of their respective nations to come and go unmolested, but he could scarcely credit the latter fact. It seemed to him, as indeed it was, preposterous. "For," said he to the brother middy who had given him the information, "would not the nations whom the Dey had the impudence to tax join their fleets together, pay him an afternoon visit one fine day, and blow him and his Moors and Turks and city into a heap of rubbish?"

What the middy replied we have now no means of knowing, but certain it is that his information was correct, for some of the principal nations did, at that time, submit to the degradation of this tax, and they did *not* unite their fleets for the extinction of the pirates!

Poor George Foster now began to find out that the terrible truths which he had refused to believe were indeed great realities, and had now begun to affect himself. He experienced an awful sinking of the heart when it occurred to him that no one would ever know anything about his fate, for the little boat would be sure to be found bottom up, sooner or later, and it would of course be assumed that he had been drowned.

Shall it be said that the young midshipman was weak, or wanting in courage, because he bowed his head and wept when the full force of his condition came home to him? Nay, verily, for there was far more of grief for the prolonged agony that was in store for his mother and sister than for the fate that awaited himself. He prayed, as well as wept. "God help me—and them!" he exclaimed aloud. It was brief but sincere. Perhaps the more sincere because so brief. At all events it was that acknowledgment of utter helplessness which secures the help of the Almighty Arm.

Growing weary at last, he stretched himself on the locker, and, with the facility of robust health, fell into a sound sleep. Youth, strength, and health are not easily incommoded by wet garments! Besides, the weather was unusually warm at the time.

How long he slept he could not tell, but the sun was high when he awoke, and his clothes were quite dry. Other signs there were that he had slept long, such as the steadiness of the breeze and the more regular motion of the vessel, which showed that the gale was over and the sea going down. There was also a powerful sensation in what he styled his "bread-basket"—though it might, with equal truth, have been called his meat- and vegetable basket—which told more eloquently than anything else of the lapse of time.

Rising from his hard couch, and endeavouring to relieve the aching of the bound arms by change of position, he observed that the cabin hatch was open, and that nothing prevented his going on deck, if so disposed. Accordingly,

he ascended, though with some difficulty, owing to his not having been trained to climb a ladder in a rough sea without the use of his hands.

A Moor, he observed, had taken his friend Peter the Great's place at the tiller, and the captain stood near the stern, observing a passing vessel. A stiffish but steady breeze carried them swiftly over the waves, which, we might say, laughingly reflected the bright sunshine and the deep-blue sky. Several vessels of different rigs and nationalities were sailing in various directions, both near and far away.

Going straight to the captain with an air of good-humoured *sang froid* which was peculiar to him, Foster said,

"Captain, don't you think I've had these bits of ropeyarn on my wrists long enough? I'm not used, you see, to walking the deck without the use of my hands: and a heavy lurch, as like as not, would send me slap into the leec-scuppers—sailor though I be. Besides, I won't jump overboard without leave, you may rely upon that. Neither will I attempt, single-handed, to fight your whole crew, so you needn't be afraid."

The stern Moor evidently understood part of this speech, and he was so tickled with the last remark that his habitual gravity gave place to the faintest flicker of a smile, while a twinkle gleamed for a moment in his eye. Only for a moment, however. Pointing over the side, he bade his prisoner "look."

Foster looked, and beheld in the far distance a three-masted vessel that seemed to bear a strong resemblance to a British man-of-war.

"You promise," said the captain, "not shout or ro-ar."

"I promise," answered our middy, "neither to shout nor 'ro-ar'—for my doing either, even though like a bull of Bashan, would be of no earthly use at this distance."

"Inglesemans," said the captain, "niver brok the word!" After paying which scarcely-deserved compliment he gave an order to a sailor who was coiling up ropes near him, and the man at once proceeded to untie Foster's bonds.

"My good fellow," said the midshipman, observing that his liberator was the man whom he had knocked down the night before, "I'm sorry I had to floor you, but it was impossible to help it, you know. An Englishman is like a bulldog. He won't suffer himself to be seized by the throat and choked if he can help it!"

The Turk, who was evidently a renegade Briton, made no reply whatever to this address: but, after casting the lashings loose, returned to his former occupation.

Foster proceeded to thank the captain for his courtesy and make him acquainted with the state of his appetite, but he was evidently not in a conversational frame of mind. Before a few words had been spoken the captain stopped him, and, pointing down the skylight, said, sharply,

"Brufkust! Go!"

Both look and tone admonished our hero to obey. He descended to the cabin, therefore, without finishing his sentence, and there discovered that

"brukfust" consisted of two sea-biscuits and a mug of water. To these dainties he applied himself with infinite relish, for he had always been Spartan-like as to the quality of his food, and hunger makes almost any kind of dish agreeable.

While thus engaged he heard a hurried tramping of feet on deck, mingled with sharp orders from the captain. At first he thought the sounds might have reference to taking in a reef to prepare for a squall, but as the noise rather increased, his curiosity was roused, and he was about to return on deck when Peter the Great suddenly leaped into the cabin and took hurriedly

from the opposite locker a brace of highly ornamented pistols and a cimitar.

"What's wrong, Peter?" asked Foster, starting up.

"We's a-goin' to fight!" groaned the negro. "Oh! I's an awful hyperkrite! You stop where you am, massa, else you'll get whacked."

Despite the risk of being "whacked," the youth would have followed the negro on deck, had not the hatch been slammed in his face and secured. Next moment he heard a volley of musketry on deck. It was instantly replied to by a distant volley, and immediately thereafter groans and

curses showed that the firing had not been without effect.

That the pirate had engaged a vessel of some sort was evident, and our hero, being naturally anxious to see if not to share in the fight, tried hard to get out of his prison, but without success. He was obliged, therefore, to sit there inactive and listen to the wild confusion overhead. At last there came a crash, followed by fiercer shouts and cries. He knew that the vessels had met and that the pirates were boarding. In a few minutes comparative silence ensued, broken only by occasional footsteps and the groaning of the wounded.

(To be continued.)

EDRIC THE NORSEMAN:

A TALE OF ADVENTURE AND DISCOVERY.

By J. F. HODGETTS,

Late Professor and Crown Examiner at Moscow, Author of "Harold, the Boy-Earl," "Ivan Dobroff," "Kormak the Viking," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XV.—THE LYING TUNIC.

THORFINN, now having on board the Rolf-Kraké and the Slepner the most extraordinary and most costly cargoes ever brought to any part of Scandinavian territories (to which at that time Iceland was considered to belong), determined to get rid of them in Norway, where many traders from all nations used to meet. At Leif's demand the Slepner was conveyed, with twenty chosen men of Eirik's train, to Reykjavik with Thorward and his wife and Edric's share of gain on board, and Thorhnn promised to convey her thither. Another armed ship, expressly built for Leif, called the Iduna, was ordered to attend them to complete the convoy, and render all escape impossible.

Freydisa was beside herself with rage at being thus a prisoner. Her will had hitherto been law—a dangerous state of things for any one; for her it had proved most destructive. Her husband, instead of being head and master of the home, was a mere puppet in the hands of this most strong-minded, self-willed woman.

The three ships sailed from Eirik's Fiord with a fair wind together. Old Eirik, leaning upon Leif's stout arm, stood watching their departure. When the mastheads had sunk on the horizon he turned and said, "I wonder whether I shall ever see that boy again. He is a splendid fellow! Very like his father—very like his father! Yes, yes, yes!"

"What is it, Eirik Thorwaldson?"—such was the more respectful way of speaking to a senior in those days. "What is it? Thou art sad!"

"Ay, my good son! The changes that an old man sees are sure to make him sad. As we grow older the mind flies back to former days, and things and persons, but *they* have passed away. The present has no charms for us as we approach the future, and that, in some respects, is not now so attractive as it promised us to be."

Leif looked at Eirik in amaze. "What, art thou really—?"

Eirik interrupted him. "No, Leif;

I am no Christian. But we are taught to look for such a time, when the old heaven shall pass away and be succeeded by a new one. Now who shall say which shall be best for *me*, a champion of the olden faith, the new and glittering Gimlé, the golden home of gods and men, or the old bluff Valhalla of my youth? This is itself a type of what I mean: the old things pass away, and if I find the things I love all fleeting from me here below—ah, well, it is not thy affair, my boy!"

"My dearest father, everything concerning thee concerns me quite as much as what men might perchance consider more my business. But all I have I owe to thee, and what I am is only like an after-glow of thy grand skill in leading men and forming states of them. I am more proud of being Eirikson than being Leif. Therefore when I feel a happiness beyond the grave, a home above assured to me, it is a grief to think my father sees it not as well!"

"Thou art a rare good fellow, Leif, but we must not talk so. *I am too old to learn.* And, I must say, I miss the clang of arms, the ring of sword and shield, that was the music of my youth. Thy men are peaceful, thy town is not my town; the men are sober, earnest, and not quarrelsome. And mine—well, let it be. That is a fearful woman, Thorward's wife," continued Eirik, changing the subject rapidly. "I pity Thorward, though he is a fool to let his wife completely hold the rudder. But she is fearful!"

"What thinks my father of his grandson Edric?"

"Ha, ha! a clever lad! A bold, bright boy, and very clever. Iceland will find a chief in him, when he grows up, to lead in the assembly of state, for, let them talk as much as they may choose about men being equal, they are *not*. The noble mind will make itself respected; the weakling is despised!"

This conversation will show the reader what was going on in the old pagan's mind, but, leaving him to draw

comparisons between the heathen past and Christian present, we pass on with Edric in the good ship Rolf-Kraké to visit Iceland on his way to Norway.

When they arrived at Reykiavik, the first thing to be done was to send out the messengers to call the owners of the various estates to meet in conclave to discuss Freydisa's crime, and also to determine in how far her husband was to blame.

Magni was glad to see his ward again, and as to Thorfrida, her joy was boundless when she saw her son, so tall, so strong, so noble-looking; but, more than all, with such an honest fame, for though he had not, like the fabled heroes of romance, overcome armies with his boyish arm, or shown experienced warriors how to war, he had been known to do his duty upon all occasions bravely and well. So she was very glad, and proud of all those little incidents which showed that Thorfinn was well pleased with him—such as permitting him to hold the shields to show the Skrællings, and the like. She liked his views of life, which were straightforward, honest, practical, and just.

The house in which she lived was not far off from that which Magni owned, and it was large enough and well-appointed, so that her son found there a home well suited to his wants. Let us not pry into those holier councils which passed between them. She was his idol, his idea of perfect womanhood. For him Icelandic had no holier word than "mother." And in those old days honour to parents was a sacred duty.

"Now, Edric, tell me more. Wouldst thou prefer to live in Wineland or in the frozen North up here?"

"Mother, this is my *home*! What say the Scandinavian proverbs? One's own home is the best home though never so small a house. Everything one eats at home is sweet. He who lives at another man's table wrongs his own palate."

"There are many such sayings, Edric, and those thou speakest of are from the

heathen book of proverbs, called the *Havemál*, which has much truth in it, but faintly like the twilight just before the day. We must be careful lest 'religious pride' should puff us up, and teach us to despise our fathers!"

"Eirik is a heathen!"

there were none. Our work was mostly cutting wood, or shooting deer (and *Skrællings*), plucking grapes, and rowing—nothing more."

"Didst thou not pine for home?"

"Never; I prayed our blessed Lord to take thee in His care each night and

"Go on, my son, what can I say or do to help thee?"

"Oh, everything. I want advice about my visit over yonder to the Norwegian court."

"Thou must have dress and arms, a train of followers, and thou must buy



"See that in thy keeping its lustre be not dimmed,"

"Very well answered, Edric. No man surely could *despise* old Eirik—though I think his heathenism may some day give way before the truth. Now speak about thyself. I want to learn all thy adventures to make a saga of them or a lay and sing them to my harp."

"What a descent, dear mother! from yonder grand old Eirik down to little me! But as to my adventures, really

morning—then I was happy, knowing thou wert so safe!"

Whether it was the artless simplicity of this speech or the depth of conviction as to the reality of what her son believed—whatever this assertion proved we cannot say, but, much to Edric's astonishment, she wept!

"Come, mother! This won't do. I have so much to say, and if I make you cry, why, I had better hold my tongue."

a ship when thou art there, and sail her back thyself."

"No, mother, that will do some future time. At present I shall go to Norway almost like a peasant, and want thy council as to whom I could apply to learn a little Scandinavian law."

"What a strange wish! What! Dost thou want to be a lawyer?"

"Do I want to be a shark? I am a sailor, mother, if we come to that; and

between those two callings there is such a mighty difference that—"

"But did not Thorfinn call thee a sea-lawyer only yesterday?"

"Ha, ha! well hit, dear mother. Oh, how I love to see thee look so bright and talk to me so kindly!"

"Did I before thou wentest off to sea ever talk otherwise than kindly?"

"Never, mother, never. But I feel it somehow more since I have knocked about a bit with men. Now tell me, I must soon be seen about, I must have clothes prepared of simpler fashion than even these unpretending garments. A tunic I must have with no gold band about the edge. Cross garterings of simple leather, a common blue cloth cap, a simple belt to hang my sword in."

"I am surprised at all these wishes, Edric. Surely there is, I hope, no falsehood going on, no trick or mean deception! Speak out, my son, what is it?"

"Mother, our kinsman Eirik tells me that his son, my father's brother Ulf, is such a nothing, that he is really not akin to him. And truly, how can what is base be kin with what is noble? Well, anyhow, Eirik disowns him, and says he is no son of his. He bids me buy my father's land again. Now if I am observed to go about clad like a wealthy yarl, he will demand much more from me than if my habit led men to suppose I was much poorer than I am. I shall tell no lie, I shall not dress in rags, but here in Iceland men are equal, as they say, and surely I am free. If I be free, I, sure, may dress me how I please. If all be equal it is a lie if I assume superior rank by dressing as a yarl."

"Hast thou told Eirik this?"

"Yes, and he laughed in great delight about it."

"I like it not, my son. *It is a lie* for thee to go on ting dressed specially to make a false impression. Is this the reason why the dress thou hast is much less splendid than it ought to be, considering whose son thou art?"

"Yes, mother, that's the only reason."

"I am surprised that Eirik liked thy trick. He is so noble, open, generous—although a pagan—ha! there I see the reason! The true light has not shone upon his mind. But we who know that every word, that every action, should be pure and holy, *have not the right to lie* even in appearance. Edric, thou darest not do it!"

Edric looked stunned at what his mother said, but felt the truth of it directly:

"I will remove this lying tunic, mother; lo! I will go on board and change it instantly. Dear mother, be not thou ashamed of me; but it was wrong; I am ashamed and sorry. Oh, how good a mother's counsel is."

"Thou hast confessed thy fault, thou hast repented. These are the only doors to gain admission to a heaven lost! Go, my dear boy, and change, come back to me in such a dress as may befit thy father's name, not out of idle pride, but from respect to him whom God's own law desires thee to honour. Go on board and change."

He left her presence, and was hurrying to the ship, when who should meet him in the way but Ulf, who just had come to Reykjavik to buy some neces-

saries for his farm. He stared at Edric, who returned the stare with interest.

"Well, who art thou?" cried Ulf. "Some beggar's brat, or merchant's prentice going to the ships?"

But Edric knew him instantly, and said,

"My name is Edric Sigvaldson; I came on shore to see my mother, put on this poor garment for a special purpose, and now return to change it!"

"Going to see thy own mother! A pretty reason to adopt disguise, forsooth! Thy mother! ha, ha, ha! put on that tunic for disguise. Thou foolish braggart, I'll lay my whole estate that yonder rock* is just the very best thou hast, and shouldst thou meet me in the street or on the road, dressed in a finer habit, I'll swear that thou hast borrowed it to cheat the better!"

Edric felt his blood boil. He raised the javelin, which, like most men of any pretensions to rank above the common herd, he carried in his hand after the fashion of a walking stick, but then he dropped it. First, he dared not strike, for was not Ulf his father's brother? Next, how could he assume a virtuous air when Ulf reproached him with the truth, told from another point of view, but still the truth? So he was powerless. He trailed his spear behind him, and, with downcast looks, walked slowly to the stage by which men reach the ships, and stepped on board the Rolf-Kraké, whence he soon returned to shore, dressed in a deep-blue tunic edged with gold, long crimson leggings of the finest cloth, cross-gartered with gilded leather. He wore a richly-jewelled belt, whence hung the sword which he had worn all through the trip, and which did not look quite in keeping with his point-device attire. Delicate shoes adorned his feet. Across his shoulders hung a deep blue mantle, edged with gold, his left hand held the Scandinavian target or round shield, bound with burnished bronze. The centre boss was bronze, and the shield's surface was all painted blue. His cap was like a Highland chieftain's cap, made of the same material as that in use to-day. Osríc himself was hardly such a dandy, yet in the walk and look of Edric there was a something very different from the effeminate weakness we think of when we speak of dandies.

So he strode down to where his mother stood awaiting him before the door of her not very lordly dwelling. She had observed his meeting with his uncle, but could not hear what passed. When he came up to where she stood, she said, with pride and pleasure, "So should a warrior's son be clad—what said Yarl Ulf?"

Then Edric blushed crimson, and told his mother all that Ulf had said.

"Thou seest, Edric, I was right. Thy lying tunic brought thee shame directly. What didst thou do with it?"

"I threw it overboard."

His mother laughed a pleasant, comely laugh, and said, "Come to the house, my son; thy friend and mine, Yarl Magni, with the Lady Ingeborg, will dine with

us to-day. Thinkest thou Thorfinn, with his wife, can come?"

"I will go ask them, mother, and bring little Nils."

So he went, and soon returned, bringing the "accomplished" Thorfinn and his lovely wife, who both were glad to come and see Thorfrida and her boy at home.

The hall was not a vast or lofty one, but full of comfort. It was, as might have been expected, more like a bower than an ordinary hall. But on the dais was room to spare for all the guests and serving-men and maidens, who did their work with pleasure for love of their good mistress.

Then the good mother reaped the highest happiness that any mortal can enjoy on earth below. She heard her son commended. Thorfinn was loud in Edric's praise, and from his arm he took a bracelet and gave it to the boy; another he presented to his friend and "brother" Nils, using kind words of encouragement and praise.

Then said Thorfrida, "Christian friends and chiefs, I have a present for my son which I desire to make upon this solemn day—solemn because it is the day when, sixteen winters back, my son first saw the light. He has not thrown dishonour on the name of Sigvald—nay, he has proved a worthy son of a most worthy father. He has, you tell me, shown himself a brave and daring sailor. He has been tried in conflict and borne himself as Sigvald would have wished his son to bear himself had he been living still. But he to-day has won a victory the greatest man can win—he has subdued himself."

Here she related how the tunic had been changed, and why, and how the youth had checked the rising impulse to strike his father's brother. These two achievements she declared to be his highest and his best. "Therefore," she continued, "the time methinks has come when he should wear his father's sword! Here, then, I give thee, Edric Sigvaldson, a weapon that was always first in fight, and shone with lustre like its owner's soul—bright, pure, and steadfast! Take this blade, my boy, and see that in thy keeping its lustre be not dimmed."

Here she gave the glorious weapon to her son, who took it with that mingled feeling of reverence and awe with which, in days gone by, his father's sword was almost worshipped by a chieftain's son. He could not speak, but, rising from his seat, he knelt beside his mother's chair and kissed her hand with that old-world devotion long since passed away.

He rose and bared the blade, the flash of which was like the streamers of the Northern lights dancing above the snow. His joy was far too great for utterance.

Then said Magni, "The sword is a warrior's true delight; each champion worthy of the name must love his blade; but remember, Edric, we Christians dare not spill the blood of God's own creatures, formed in His likeness and His image, for our mere wanton pleasure. It is the faith of Peace that we must guard, but it is right to combat, when the need exists, for that sweet faith and those who hold it. Our

* Rock is the proper name for a coat in the German, Scandinavian, and older English languages.

viking fathers loved the weapon as a thing to be adored; we see in it an instrument of safety that, in firm hands, shall keep the innocent and weak from being wronged, and guard the church from ruffian hands.

"But there is a higher teaching in the blade. In it behold an emblem of the 'Truth'—truth combative, truth ever victorious. The priests say that when our most blessed Lord was seen by man after His course amongst us had been run, that from His mouth there came a sword, and truly was that vision very full of teaching, for from whose mouth alone does perfect Truth proceed? From His, who is the Truth! These thoughts are very solemn, and I must own too much for such a simple

man as I. But think of this, friend Edric, when thou wouldst praise thy sword, that all its better qualities are those of Truth. Why do we say, 'He is as true as steel'? Because of this relationship. Look at that blade! It flashes like the light, and light is Truth. Feel its sharp edge! How cutting is the Truth! It hews through opposition of all kinds, remaining firm itself. It is a safeguard. In the mimic fights we used to have at Greendale I have seen thee ward off every blow, using thy sword as shield! Be a good swordsman, Edric, in the Christian sense!"

Said Thorfinn, "All men know that Magni is a wise and valiant yarl. What he has said about the sword delights me to the heart, though I have had, I

must confess, much more experience of the weapon *as* a weapon than as a text to preach from. I have seen Edric in no *mimic* fight, but in stern battle employ his sword, as Magni says, to act as shield as well. Touching his love of truth, we know the story of the lying tunic. I knew the champion Sigvald, and I know Edric Sigvaldson, and when I say I think him worthy to bear his father's sword it is no feeble praise."

The feast was long and solemn. A day it was that Edric never in his life forgot. But we must hasten on to other matters, and leave these simple, honest folk in innocent enjoyment of the pleasures that spring up at the meeting of true friends.

(To be continued.)

ANOTHER ODD BOY.

JOHN BUZZACOTT.

I WAS the head master of a rather small school in a country town not a hundred miles from London. Most of my pupils were London boys—sharp and intelligent lads, brimful of fun—fun that I was sometimes obliged to frown on in face and laugh at in heart. Thoughtless, frolicsome fellows; good-hearted, and not generally subject to either of the faults recorded by Charles Dickens in the advice given by good Betsy Trotwood to David Copperfield, "Never be false; never be mean; never be cruel." At least, I do not think they were intentionally cruel; we know boys are oftentimes thoughtlessly so. People say, "Boys will be boys;" to which may be responded, "Yes; but they may as well be good boys while they are about it!" I dwell upon this because it will best explain some of the circumstances I am about to relate.

On one occasion I received a request to take a boy into my school who was rather older than I preferred, but who was very backward in his studies. On making the usual inquiries respecting him, I found that the cause of his backwardness was that he had not all his mental faculties fully developed, or could not be developed. He was clean in his habits, very good-tempered, quiet and obedient; his writing and spelling were very fair, and his memory good. He had been to school before, but the boys ill-treated him. He had such a pleasant, inoffensive face that I felt some interest in him, and determined to see what I could do with him. I found him totally deficient in judgment, having no reasoning powers whatever. I will call him John Buzzacott, because he had, as the Scotch say, "a bee in his bonnet."

The first peculiarity I found in him was his partiality for railways and steam-engines. There was a path in my garden which commanded a view of a railway, and it was his delight to walk up and down that path, waiting for the sight of a train. This he would look at when it came in sight with a quiet sort of satisfaction, and then wait patiently for another. He would ask if there was not a way to get to that railway, and if they would let him walk along it! This, of course, made me somewhat anxious, and, as I shall presently relate, on one occasion gave me a terrible fright.

He was soon "at home" with us, and gave us far more pleasure than anxiety. He could sing "The Grandfather's Clock"—a part of it, at least, and "tooral-looral" the rest in a most comical manner. He also sang, "Here stands a young man who

wants a sweetheart," and joined in the enjoyment of his schoolfellows over it amazingly. John's parents were pious people, so he had been brought up with a reverence for holy things, and his conduct at worship was always good. He liked to know the names of preachers, and would tack them on to some rhyme, always, he thought (if he did think), to show forth their merit. Now the other boys, finding out this peculiarity, would make other rhymes, not so reverential, to the great trouble of John, who would, with his solemn shake of the head, declare that they "must not make fun of ministers"—a sentiment which I, as in duty bound, was ever ready to endorse. Thus with John, "Mr. Bright was always right!" To this the boys would respond that "Mr. Bright was the boy to fight!" Now I must confess that John would for a moment be tickled with the incongruity of this statement, but only for a moment. His face would instantly assume a serious look, and the solemn shake of the head would emphasise his declaration, "Never make fun of ministers!" In like manner "Mr. Binns told people of their sins," but the others roughly declared that he "stood on two pins." On one occasion the good Mr. Cecil preached. Being somewhat of a rhymester myself, I could not help thinking John would be somewhat puzzled for a rhyme, but I found on reaching home he had risen to the occasion, and had it ready. He had exalted the Rev. Mr. Cecil to what was doubtless, to John, a great dignity, as being an earthen vessel. But, alas! his schoolfellows had risen to the occasion also, and asserted what was not only irreverent, but, from my personal knowledge, quite untrue, in saying, to John's great horror, that "Mr. Cecil was a penny whistle!"

John was often very quiet, seemingly pondering about something. Who could tell what? Was he thinking at all? Sometimes I would say,

"You are thinking, John? What are you thinking about?"

"No, sir! I wasn't finking" (he was always very weak about his *thetas*)—"I wasn't finking, sir! I wouldn't do such a silly fink!"

"What were you doing, then?"

"I was cogitating, sir."

Presently he would come up to me, and again, with the most serious air, repeat, "I was cogitating, sir;" after which he would perhaps sit or walk about quietly; but the burthen of the awful accusation that he had

been thinking would weigh too heavily upon him, and—it may be a quarter of an hour after—he would come to me and dolorously declare, "I wasn't finking, sir!"

There was one thing in which John's judgment, if I may use the word—*taste* would, perhaps, be more appropriate—was most correct. That was in the matter of eating and drinking. He had most tender and heart-moving recollections of savoury dishes, which he would tell us about with a delightful look of satisfaction. Some of his favourite dishes were not, perhaps, of the most wholesome nature. Muffins, for instance. He happened one day to be at the door when an itinerant vendor of these indigestible commodities came up. The generosity of his order was manifest when he staggered into the room with a pile reaching from as low as his hands would go up to his longing mouth. Fortunately, he had not paid for them, so I was enabled to insist upon the man taking the greater part back. This was indeed fortunate, for John would have thought himself in duty bound to have eaten the whole.

I have a medical friend, an M.D., who, when his almost incessant professional duties will allow, runs down to my place to enjoy a country walk and a quiet talk with his old friend. He became quite interested in John Buzzacott, and never came without seeing him and asking him a few questions—to probe his mind, I suppose.

This is a sample of their intercourse, which I once heard:

Doctor. "Well, John, how are you today?" *John.* "I am quite well, thank you, sir." *D.* "Still enjoying your country life?" *J.* "Yes, sir, I enjoy my country life! I enjoy my country life, sir!" *D.* "Now what do you admire most in the country?" *J.* "The beauties of nature, sir—the beauties of nature!" (I must here observe that this observation was not quite original. John had picked it up, and it had become a favourite phrase of his.) *D.* "Ah, you admire the beauties of nature?" *J.* "Yes, sir! I admire the beauties of nature!" Then, after a pause, and very impressively, "I admire the beauties of nature, sir!"

The questions, up to this point, were to get the subject well prepared for treatment. Then came the probe:

Doctor. "Now, John, which of all the beauties of nature do you admire most?"

John (after a pause, and with most intense earnestness): "Roast goose, with plenty of sage and onions, sir!"

I have before remarked that John's love for railways and trains was a source of anxiety to me, and that on one occasion it gave me a terrible fright. It was in this manner:

One fine day in early autumn I had taken the boys to a hill in the neighbourhood of the town—a beautiful, breezy place, which commanded a view over the surrounding country for many miles. Along the foot of the hill ran the railway I have spoken of, and which, after touching at the town—three miles off—sped away till lost in the distance.

The boys had brought their cricketing requisites, and were soon in earnest contest. John Buzzacott could never stand a ball! He was once prevailed upon to try, but as the ball came trundling towards him he dropped the bat and fled as if for life! So he asked to be allowed to stand on the brow of the hill and watch for the trains. This was not so interesting a pursuit for me, so, calling a boy not engaged in cricket, I told him to keep his eye upon Buzzacott, and I, sitting near, opened a book and began to read. I now and then gave a glance at John, who was always there, his hands in his pockets and his head careened so that he might catch sight, over the shoulder of the hill, a half moment sooner, of the beloved objects of his desire, for they came at intervals of not less than half an hour. Presently I became so absorbed in my book that I neglected for some time to look up. When I did, he and his keeper were gone! I did not trouble much at first about it, thinking that the exulting cries of the cricketers had enticed them; but, to make sure, I went to see. The two were not there, and I found on inquiry they had not been seen. I then became somewhat alarmed, and returned to the place where I had left them. Nowhere about there were they, but, looking towards the object of my dread, there, coming from under the base of the hill, was the unfortunate simpleton, about a mile from the spot where I stood, making for the railway as fast as his legs would take him. Presently from under the hill (its rotundity hid its base) there was his keeper in hot pur-

suit. Brave boy Smith! Brave boy, stick to him, and all may be well! Both were at too great a distance to be clearly recognised, but both were of relative sizes, and both agreed in dress with John and his keeper. The first had the shambling run that distinguished Buzzacott, but being much bigger he could easily keep ahead. The road from the hill went under the railway, being crossed by a bridge. About half way down was a private gate which led into the fields, and beside the bridge was a level crossing, used only by the farmer. The first figure reached this private gate, and, as I feared he would, sprung over it and made straight for the crossing. This he reached, the second always in pursuit, and continued his course along the railway. The station was about a mile and half from this point. Would he meet a train before he reached it, for there he would be recognised and detained? Alas! no. There was the puffing of an engine at the station, and soon a train got into its usual speed, and was rushing forward to meet him. I felt that the poor fellow was doomed to be dashed to pieces. Nearer and nearer they rapidly got; less and still less the distance between them. At last the engine was close upon him. Oh, horror! I put my hand instinctively over my eyes and groaned aloud. When I again looked—oh, joy! joy!—they had safely passed the train, and were still careering away towards the station, where I knew they would be safe. They now appeared so small that I could hardly distinguish them, and soon they were lost to view in the station precincts. I now determined to call the other boys together and to return home as quickly as possible, so that I might find if they had reached there safely. I turned round for that purpose, and there was John, his hands in his pockets as usual, watching the almost invisible train! There was his keeper, faithfully watchful too, but whiling away his time by tripping a stick!

Can any of you account satisfactorily for this? I cannot. Some may say that I dozed off and dreamt it. No! In my agitation I had rushed off to a cottage just by

and borrowed a telescope which I knew they possessed, and the good folks there often speak of the wan look my face presented. I can only think of it as a most remarkable coincidence. It was, I have no doubt, one cause of a severe attack of illness which brought me to death's door, and compelled my retirement some years before I intended from a profession which, perhaps, my temperament unfitted me for.

At the end of the next term I felt, with some reluctance, compelled to decline the further supervision of my young friend. Before taking leave of John Buzzacott I must give you one more instance of his peculiarities. This took place soon after he came; but, before narrating it, I thought it well you should understand him somewhat.

One bright, balmy summer's half-holiday the fine weather tempted my wife, whom I will call Mrs. Chester, to accompany me and the boys (excuse the schoolmaster) over the hills for a walk. I always gave my boys plenty of liberty, with the understanding that the liberty was not to be abused. So they were all roaming about, but within sight; John Buzzacott, of course, with us, for he would have been afraid to have gone from our side. He was on one side, I on the other, of Mrs. Chester. After a little while I noticed a visible uneasiness, and an uncomfortable moving about of my wife, which led me to a possible and yet an almost impossible conclusion; so I said somewhat sternly to her other companion,

"John, are you pinching Mrs. Chester?"

He was round by my side in a moment. With grave face, and wide-open, serious eyes, he looked at me as he said, with a solemn shake of the head,

"No, sir! I was not pinching Mrs. Chester! I would not do such a thing! I would not do such a thing, sir! I was not pinching Mrs. Chester! I was *tickling* her!"

"But, John, you must not do that. It is very improper!"

"Yes, sir!" with a still more serious look and a still more solemn shake of the head, "Yes, sir, very improper—in the street!"

THE MASTER OF THE SHELL:

A PUBLIC SCHOOL STORY.

BY TALBOT BAINES REED,

Author of "A Dog with a Bad Name," "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VII.—ARTHUR AND THE BARONET SETTLE DOWN FOR THE TERM.

THE reader is not to imagine that Railsford's house contained nobody but the four prefects of the Sixth form and the sedate tenants of the study immediately over the master's head, who belonged to the Shell. On the contrary, the fifty boys who made up the little community was fully representative of all grades and classes of Grandcourt life. There was a considerable substratum of "Babies" belonging to the junior forms, who herded together noisily and buzzed like midges in every hole and corner of the house. Nor were Herapath and Oakshott, with their two cronies, by any means the sole representatives of that honourable fraternity known as the Shell, too mature for the junior school, and yet too juvenile for the upper forms. A score at least of Railsford's subjects belonged to this

noble army, and were ready to wage war with anybody or anything—for a consideration.

Still ascending in the scale, came a compact phalanx of Fifth form heroes, counting some of the best athletes of the second eleven and fifteen, and yet not falling in with the spirited foreign policy so prevalent in the rest of the house. On an emergency they could and would turn out, and their broad backs and sturdy arms generally gave a good account of themselves. But as a general rule they grieved their friends by an eccentric habit of "mugging," which, as anybody knows, is a most uncomfortable and alarming symptom in a boy of a house such as Railsford's.

True, there were among them a few noble spirits who never did a stroke of work unless under compulsion, but as a

rule the Fifth form fellows in Railsford's lay under the imputation of being studious, and took very little trouble to clear their characters. Only when the school sports came round, or the house matches, their detractors used to forgive them.

The four prefects, to whom the reader has been already introduced, divided among them the merits and shortcomings of their juniors. Ainger and Felgate, though antagonistic by nature, were agreed as to an aggressive foreign policy; while Barnworth and of course the amiable Stafford considered there was quite enough work to do at home without going afield. Yet up to the present these four heroes had been popular in their house—Barnworth was the best high jumper Grandcourt had had for years, and Ainger was as steady as a

rock at the wickets of the first eleven, and was reported to be about to run Smedley, the school captain, very close for the mile at the spring sports. Stafford, dear fellow that he was, was not a particularly "hot" man at anything, but he would hold the coat of any one who asked him, and backed everybody up in turn, and always cheered the winner as heartily as he consoled with the loser. Felgate was one of those boys who could do better than they do, and whose unsteadiness is no one's fault but their own. His ways were sometimes crooked, and his professions often exceeded his practice. He meant well sometimes, and did ill very often; and, in short, was just the kind of fellow for the short tempered honest Anger cordially to dislike.

Such was the miscellaneous commu-

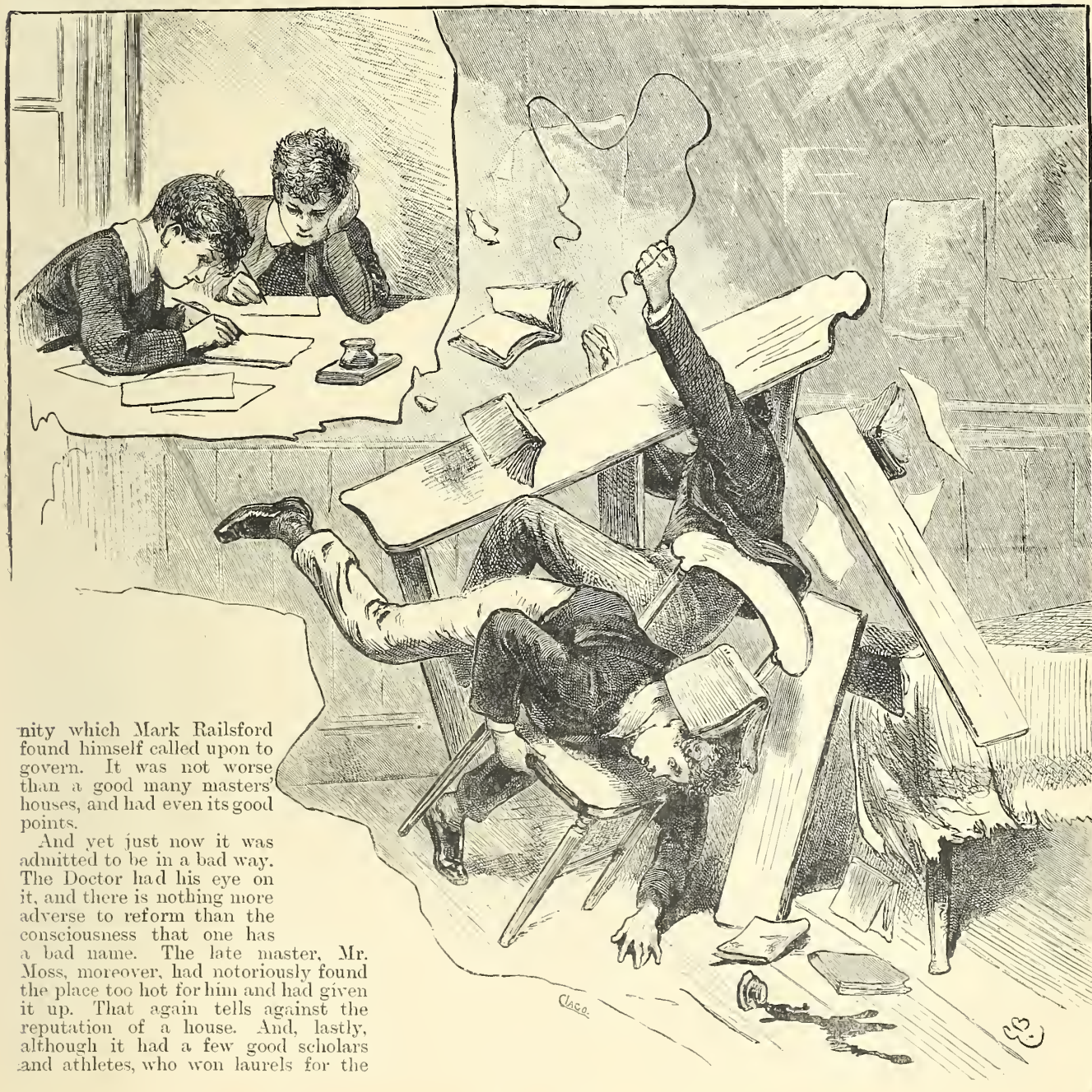
school, there seemed not enough of them to do anything for the house, which had steadily remained at the bottom of the list for general proficiency for several terms.

If you inquired how all this came about, you would hear all sorts of explanations, but the one which found most favour in the delinquent house itself was summed up in the single word "Bickers."

The origin of the deadly feud between the boys of Railsford's and the master of the adjoining house was a mystery passing the comprehension even of such as professed to understand the ins and outs of juvenile human nature. It had grown up like a mushroom, and no one exactly remembered how it began. Mr. Bickers, some years ago, had been a candidate for the Mastership of the Shell,

but had been passed over in favour of Mr. Roe. And ever since, so report went, he had been actuated by a fiendish antipathy to the boys who "kept" in the house of his rival. He had worried Mr. Moss out of the place, and the boys of the two houses, quick to take up the feuds of their chiefs, had been in a state of war for months. Not that Mr. Bickers was a favourite in his own house. He was not, any more than Mr. Moss had been in his. But any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, and when Mr. Bickers's boys had a mind to "go for" Moss's boys, they espoused the cause of Bickers, and when Mr. Moss's boys went out to battle against those of Bickers's house, their war-cry was "Moss."

Much legend had grown up round the feud; but if any one had had patience to examine it to the bottom he would



nity which Mark Railsford found himself called upon to govern. It was not worse than a good many masters' houses, and had even its good points.

And yet just now it was admitted to be in a bad way. The Doctor had his eye on it, and there is nothing more adverse to reform than the consciousness that one has a bad name. The late master, Mr. Moss, moreover, had notoriously found the place too hot for him and had given it up. That again tells against the reputation of a house. And, lastly, although it had a few good scholars and athletes, who won laurels for the

"Burying the two mechanics under a cascade of books, plaster, and shattered timber."

probably have found the long and short to be that Mr. Bickers, being unhappily endowed with a fussy disposition and a sour and vindictive temper, had incurred the displeasure of the boys of his rival's house, and not being the man to smooth away a bad impression, had aggravated it by resenting keenly what he considered to be an unjust prejudice against himself.

This little digression may enable the reader, if he has had the patience to wade through it, to form an idea of the state of parties in that particular section of Grandcourt which chiefly came under Railsford's observation. With Roe's and Grover's houses on the other side of the big square, his boys had comparatively little to do as a house, while with the remote communities in the little square they had still less in common.

But to return to our story. The first week of the new term was one of the busiest Mark Railsford ever spent. His duties in the Shell began on the second day, and the opening performance was not calculated to elate his spirit. The sixty or seventy prodigies of learning who assembled there came from all houses. A few were bent seriously on work and promotion, the majority were equally indifferent about the one and the other, and the remainder were professional idlers—most successful in their profession.

Such were the hopeful materials which Railsford was expected to inspire with a noble zeal in the pursuit of classics, history, and divinity. It would have been as easy—at least, so it seemed to the master—to instruct the monkey-house at the Zoological Gardens. The few workers (scarcely one of whom, by the way, was in his own house) formed a little *coterie* apart, and grabbed up whatever morsels of wisdom and learning their master could afford to let drop in the midst of his hand-to-hand combat with the forces of anarchy and lethargy. But he had little to say to them. His appeals were addressed to the body of gaping, half-amused, half-bored loungers in the middle of the room, who listened pleasantly and forgot instantaneously; who never knew where to go on, and had an inveterate knack of misunderstanding the instructions for next day's work. They endured their few morning hours in the Shell patiently, resignedly, and were polite enough to yawn behind their books. They were rarely put out by their own mistakes, and when occasionally the master dropped upon them with some penalty or remonstrance, they deemed it a pity that any one should put himself so much about on their account.

Railsford was baffled. There seemed more hope in the turbulent skirmishers at the back of the room, who at least could now and then be worked upon by thunder, and always, in theory, acknowledged that lessons were things to be learned.

On the first day the "muggers" knew their task well, and Railsford glowed with hope as he expressed his approbation. But when he came to the gapers his spirits sank to zero. They had unfortunately mistaken the passage, or else the page was torn out of their book, or else they had been prevented

by colds or sprained wrists or chilblains from learning it. When told to construe a passage read out not two minutes before by one of the upper boys they knew nothing about it, and feared it was too hard for their overwrought capacities; and when pinned down where they sat to the acquirement of some short rule or passage, they explained scrowfully that that had not been Mr. Moss's method. In divinity they raised discussions on questions of dogma, and so subtly evaded challenge on questions of Greek Testament construction and various readings. In history they fell back on a few stock answers, which rarely possessed the merit of having any connection with the questions which they pretended to satisfy. But the gapers were men of peace, after all. They rarely insisted upon their own opinion, nor did it offend them to be told they were wrong.

The noisier element were less complacent; it is true, they never did a lesson through, or construed a sentence from one end to the other. Still, when they took the trouble to "mug" a question up they expected to be believed. It hurt them a good deal to be informed that they knew nothing; and to detain them or set them impositive because of a difference of opinion or an historical, classical, or theological question seemed grossly unjust. When, for instance, Sir Digby Oakshott, Baronet, on an early day of the term, publicly stated that the chief features of Cromwell's character was a large mouth and a wart on the nose, he was both hurt and annoyed to be ordered peremptorily to remain for an hour after class and write out pages 245 to 252, inclusive, of the School History. He had no objection, as he confided to his friend and comforter, Arthur Herapath, Esq., to the Master of the Shell entertaining his own opinions as to the character of the personage in question. But he believed in the maxim "give and take," and just as he would cheerfully have received anything Mr. Railsford might have to say on the subject, he at least expected that his own statement should be received in an equally candid spirit, particularly (as he was anxious to point out) since he had personally inspected a portrait of Cromwell not long ago, and verified the existence of the two features alleged.

Sir Digby, indeed, deserved some little commiseration. He had come up to Grandcourt this term pledged to the hilt to work hard and live virtuously. He had produced and proudly hung in a conspicuous place in his study a timetable, beautifully ruled and written in red and black ink, showing how each hour of every day in the week was to be spent in honest toil and well-earned sport. He had explained to his friend the interesting fact that a duplicate of this table had been presented to his mother, who thereby would be able to tell at any moment how her dear son was occupied.

"Let's see," said he, proudly, taking out his watch. "7.15. Now what am I doing at 7.15 on Thursdays? French preparation. There you are! So if she's thinking about me now she knows what I'm up to."

"But you're not doing French preparation," suggested Arthur.

"Of course I'm not, you ass. How could I when I lent Dimsdale my book? Besides, we've not started yet. I've got about a million lines to write. Do you know I'm certain it was Bickers got me into that row about the omnibus; I saw him looking on. I say, that was a stunning lark, wasn't it? I'd have won too if Riggles had kept his right side. Look here, I say, I'd better do some lines now; lend us a hand, there's a good chap. Wouldn't it be a tip if old Smiley could write; we could keep him going all day long?"

Master Oakshott had, in fact, become considerably embarrassed at the beginning of the term by one or two accidents, which conspired to put off the operation of the time-table for a short period.

The Doctor had received information through some channel of the famous chariot race on opening day, and had solaced the defeated champion with a caning (which he did not mind) and five hundred lines of Virgil (which he greatly disliked). In addition to that, Digby had received fifty lines from Ainger for pea-shooting, which, not being handed in by the required time, had doubled and trebled, and bade fair to become another five hundred before they were done. And now he had received from Railsford—from his beloved friend's future brother-in-law—seven pages of School History to write out, of which he had accomplished one during the detention hour, and had solemnly undertaken to complete the other six before to-morrow.

It spoke a good deal for the forbearance and good spirits of the unfortunate baronet that he was not depressed by his misfortunes.

Arthur, too, had come up with every idea of conducting himself as a model boy, and becoming a great moral support to his future brother-in-law.

It had pained him somewhat to find that relative was not always as grateful for his countenance as he should have been. Still, he bore him no malice. The time would come when the elder would cry aloud to the younger for aid, and he should get it.

Meanwhile, on this particular evening, Arthur found himself too busy, getting the new study into what he termed ship-shape order, to be able to adopt his friend's suggestion about the lines. His idea of ship-shape did not in every particular correspond with the ordinary acceptance of the term. He had brought down in his trunk several fine works of art, selected chiefly from the sporting papers, and representing stirring incidents in the lives of the chief prize-fighters. These, after endeavouring to take out a few of the creases contracted in the journey, he displayed over the fireplace and above the door, attaching them to the wall by means of garden nails, which had an awkward way of digging prodigious holes in the plaster and never properly reaching the laths behind. Most of the pictures consequently required frequent re-hanging, and by the end of the evening looked as if they, like the shady characters painted on them, had been in the wars.

Then Arthur had produced with some pride a small set of bookshelves, which packed away into a wonderfully small space, but which, when fitted together, were large enough to accommodate as many books as he possessed. The fitting together, however, was not very successful. Some of the crews were lost, and had to be replaced by nails, and having used the side-pieces for the shelves, and the shelves for the sides, he and Dig had a good deal of trouble with a saw and a cunningly constructed arrangement of strings to reduce the fabric into the similitude of a bookcase. When at last it was done and nailed to the wall, it exhibited a tendency to tilt forward the moment anything touched it, and pitch its contents on to the floor.

After much thought it occurred to Herapath that if they turned it upside down this defect would operate in the other direction, and hold the books securely against the wall. So, having wrenched the nails out, and been fortunate enough to find a space on the wall not rimping with wounds in the plaster, they re-erected it inversely. But alas! although the top shelf now tilted back at the wall, the bottom shelf swung forward an inch or two and let its contents out behind with the same regularity and punctuality with which it had previously rejected them in front.

Dig pronounced it a rotten concern, and voted for smashing it up; but Herapath, more dauntless, determined on one further effort.

He began to drive a large nail vehemently into the floor immediately under the refractory bookcase, and then, tying a string round the bottom shelf, he hitched the other end round the nail and drew the fabric triumphantly into the wall. It was a complete success. Even Dig applauded, and cried out to his friend that another inch would make a job of it.

Another inch did make a job of it, for just as the bottom shelf closed in the top gave a spring forward, pulling the nail along with it, and burying the two mechanics under a cascade of books, plaster, and shattered timber. Arthur and Dig sat on the floor and surveyed the ruin solidly, while Smiley, evidently under the delusion that the whole entertainment had been got up for his amusement, barked vociferously, and, seizing a "Student's Gibbon" in his teeth, worried it, in the lightness of his heart, like a rat.

At this juncture the door opened, and Railsford, with alarm in his face, entered.

"Whatever is the matter?" he exclaimed.

It was an excellent cue for the two boys, who forthwith began to rub their arms and shoulders, and make a demonstration of quiet suffering.

"This horrid bookcase won't stick up!" said Arthur. "We were trying to put the things tidy, and it came down."

"It's a pretty good weight on a fellow's arm!" said the baronet, rubbing his limb, which had really been grazed in the downfall.

"It is a very great noise on the top of my head," said the master. "I dare

say it was an accident, but you two will have to be a great deal quieter up here, or I shall have to interfere."

"We really couldn't help it, Mark—I mean Rails—I mean Mr. Railsford," said Arthur, in an injured tone. "There's Dig will get into no end of a row, as it is. He was writing out that imposition for you, and now he's hurt his arm through helping me—brick that he is! I suppose you won't mind if I finish the lines for him?"

Arthur was staking high, and would have been sadly disconcerted had his kinsman taken him at his word.

"Is your arm really hurt, Oakshott?" inquired the master.

"Oh, no; not much," said Digby, wincing dramatically, and putting on an air of determined defiance to an inward agony. "I dare say I can manage, after a rest. We had taken some of the books out, so I only had the bookcase and three shelf-loads of books on the top of me! That wasn't so much!"

"How much have you written?" demanded the master.

"Two pages, please sir."

"This time I will let that do."

"Thanks, awfully!" broke in Arthur; "you're a brick! Dig'll never do it again, will you, Dig?"

"I could do it, you know, if you really wanted," said Dig, feeling up and down his wounded limb.

"That will do!" said Mark, who had already begun to have a suspicion that he had been "done." "Clear up this mess, and don't let me hear any more noise overhead."

When he had gone the friends embraced in a gust of jubilation.

"N end of a notion of yours!" said Dig. "That leaves the lines for the Doctor and the others for Ainger. He'll keep. We'll have him in to tea and dose him with marmalade, and square him up. But, there, I must do the Doctor's lines, or I shall catch it!"

And so, despite his wounded arm, he set to work, aided by his friend, and worked off about half the penalty, by which time his arm and elbow were very sore indeed. Dimsdale, who came in later, was bribed with an invitation to jam breakfast in the morning, to help with the remainder, and the same inducement prevailed upon Tilbury. So that by a fine co-operative effort Dig stood clear with the Doctor before fight was over, and considered himself entitled to a little rest, which he forthwith proceeded to take.

The breakfast-party next morning was a great success on the whole. It was a little marred by the fact that whereas covers were laid for four, just fourteen guests turned up. This was partly Arthur's fault, for, having sallied forth with an invitation in his pocket to any one who would help his friend out with a few lines, he had dropped them about in a good many other quarters. He had secured the attendance of Simson and Maple of the Shell, and of Bateson and Jukes of the "Babies," and, with a view to ingratiate himself with some of his neighbours on the first floor, he had bidden to the banquet Wake, Ranger, Wignet, and Sherrieff of the Fifth, and actually

prevailed upon Stafford to lend the dignity of a Sixth-form patronage to the *r union*.

These heroes were naturally a little disgusted on turning up at the rendezvous to find the room crowded, with scarcely standing space to spare, by a troop of hungry and noisy juniors. The good hosts perspired with the heat of the room, and, as guest after guest crowded in, began to look a little anxious at the modest fare on the table, and speculate mentally on how far one loaf, one pot of jam, four pats of butter, a pint coffee-pot, and three-and-a-half teacups would go round the lot. At length, when Stafford arrived, and could not get in at the door for the crush, despair seized them.

"You kids had better hook it," said Arthur, to half a dozen of the juniors, who had squeezed themselves into a front rank near the table. "There's not room to-day. Come to-morrow."

Loud were the complaints, not unmingled with threatenings and gibes, of these disappointed Babies.

"What a horrible shame!" exclaimed Jukes, in a very audible voice. "We were here first."

"Do you hear?—cut!" repeated the host.

"Come along," said Bateson; "what's the use of bothering about a crumb and a half apiece? I never saw such a skinny spread in all my days."

And in the ten years which comprehended Master Bateson's "days" he had had a little experience of that sort of thing.

The company being now reduced to eight, to wit, Stafford, the four Fifth form boys, the two hosts, and Dimsdale, assumed more manageable proportions. There was room at least to move an arm or a leg, and even to shut the door. But when it came to taking seats it still became evident that the table could by no possibility hold more than six. Another crisis thereupon arose. Dimsdale was regretfully dismissed, and departed scarlet in the face, promising, as he slammed the door, to "show up" his hosts. These amiable worthies, much distressed, and not a whit cooler that the room was now comparatively empty, smiled feebly at this threat, and arranged to sit on one another's laps, so as to bring the company finally down to the capabilities of the table. But at this juncture Stafford, who had grown tired of waiting, and evidently saw little prospect of conviviality in the entertainment, remembered that he had some work to do before morning school, and rose to leave.

"Why, we've not begun yet," gasped his hosts.

"I really must go. Thanks for asking me. I've enjoyed it so much," said the amiable prefect, departing.

"Look here, I say," expostulated Arthur, "you might stay. I'll get some eggs, or a herring, if you'll stop."

But the guest of the morning was beyond reach of these blandishments, and with muttered reflections on human depravity generally, the hosts took a seat at each end of the festive board, and bade the four Fifth form fellows follow.

They had already done so. One had

cut the loaf, another had meted out the jam, another had poured out the coffee, and another had distributed the butter.

"Have some coffee?" said Wake, pleasantly, to Dig; "very good stuff."

"Thanks," said Dig, trying to look grateful. "I'll wait till there's a cup to spare."

"If you're putting on the eggs," said Ranger, confidentially, to Arthur, "keep mine on an extra fifteen seconds, please. I like them a little hardish."

"Awfully sorry," said Arthur, with a quaver in his voice; "jolly unlucky, but we're out of eggs. Got none in the place."

"Oh, never mind," said Ranger, reassuringly. "The herrings will do quite as well. Stafford may not fancy them, but we do, don't we, you chaps?"

"Rather," said Sheriff, thoughtfully scooping out the last remnants of the jam from the pot.

Arthur looked at the baronet and the baronet looked at Arthur. Things were growing desperate, and at all risks a

diversion must be made. What could they do? Dig had a vague idea of creating a scare that Smiley had gone mad; but as the animal in question was at that moment peacefully reposing on the hearth, there seemed little probability of this panic "taking." Then he calculated the possibilities of secretly cutting away one leg of the table, and so covering the defects of the meal by an unavoidable catastrophe. But he had not his penknife about him, and the two table-knives were in use.

Arthur at this point came gallantly and desperately to the rescue.

"I say, you fellows," began he, ignoring the hint about the herrings, "do you want to know a regular lark?"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Oakshott, not having the least idea what his friend was going to say, but anxious to impress upon his guests that the joke was to be a good one.

"What is it?" asked Wignet, who never believed in any one else's capacities for story-telling.

"Why," said Arthur, getting up a boisterous giggle, "you know Railsford, the new master?"

"Of course. What about him?"

"Well—keep it dark, you know. Shut up, Dig, and don't make me laugh, I say—there's such a grand joke about him."

"Out with it," said the guests, who were beginning to think again about the herrings.

"Well, this fellow—I call him Marky, you know—Mark's engaged to my sister, and—

"Ha, ha, ha!" chimed in Dig.

"And—he calls her 'Chucky,' I heard him. Oh, my wig!"

This last exclamation was caused by his looking up and catching sight of Railsford standing at the door.

The Master of the Shell had in fact called up in a friendly way to ask how Sir Digby Oakshott's arm was after the accident of the previous night.

(To be continued.)

WOLF-HUNTING IN RUSSIA.

By A. G. NASH, OF ST. PETERSBURG,

Author of "*My First Cruise in an Ice-Boat*," etc.

PART II.

As a rule the two parent-wolves, when hunted, break cover almost simultaneously at different points; and while all the wolf-hounds are engaged in the pursuit, their hopeful family, seeing the coast clear, make off into the steppe to find shelter in another forest or in the long grass.

In a short time the rest of the family is turned out by the harriers. One wolf comes out straight upon me, pausing slightly as he first catches sight of the hounds, but immediately after continuing his ungainly trot in my direction. When almost in a parallel line with me, I loose my hounds with an encouraging shout, and urge my horse to full speed, gathering up the leash meanwhile, as it trails behind. The wolf, too, is going along at his best speed, but the hounds, better than he in a "sprint" race, are gaining at every bound, and the wolf turns his head in his flight to display two formidable rows of teeth to his pursuers. Now Cherkess, shooting ahead of his comrade, runs up alongside and seizes the wolf at the back of the neck, as a well-bred hound should. Both roll over, but the superior strength of the wild animal enables him to shake himself loose from the grip of Cherkess, and, with a spiteful snap which does not take effect, to continue his flight. But the check has given time to Chechenitz to come up, and, passing his defeated fellow, he throws himself at the wolf, and both go down together. During the scuffle Cherkess dashes again into the midst, and now both the good hounds are holding the wolf firmly by the ears, and, in spite of all he can do, will not relax their grip. Hastily galloping up, I spring off my horse and step in to give the *coup de grâce*. At a favourable moment, seizing the wolf by the hind leg, to expose his side, I plunge my dagger into his heart. The hounds are still unwilling to let go his ears, and it needs a good deal of compulsion ere they do so; for it is a peculiar characteristic of this breed to hold on like grim death to anything into which they have fixed their fangs, and cases are not wanting in which a game hound has been known to die on his prey

from sheer suffocation, in refusing to loosen his grip, though panting for breath, after a long run.

I drag the body to the bushes for concealment, since I cannot single-handed hoist the heavy carcass behind the saddle; for my horse has a decided aversion to wolves in general—even dead ones—and plunges every time I make the attempt. Gathering my hounds again on the leash, I gallop off to the left, where I know, from the wheeling motion of the horsemen, that something is being hunted, and is running, first one way, then another, to avoid the hounds. I arrive in time to join in the pursuit, and have the satisfaction of seeing my dogs assist materially in another capture. Instead of killing the wolf, the hunter prefers to take this one alive, and reserve it for the young hounds, who had never yet even seen a wolf. While the hounds are still holding it, the hunter seizes an opportunity of getting astride the animal's back, and the hounds being driven off, he grasps the wolf's ears so as to prevent it from turning its head. A stout piece of green wood is thrust between his jaws by another hunter as he snarls and bites at his captors; then the raw leather leash is bound tightly round his muzzle and neck; his legs are tied together, and he is laid by in the shade until the arrival of the cart in which he is to be carried. Considerable strength and experience are necessary to take a "periarok" alive; for if once the wolf is able to turn his neck, let his rider look out for a very ugly bite.

But hark! Nakita is winding his horn, and by the notes we know it is the "gathering call." From their different stations the hunters come riding in and collect round him; but he still repeats the call to bring the loitering harriers out of the forest. When all are collected, the harriers are coupled together again, the wolves placed in the "telega" (cart), and we sit down to a simple meal of cold meat washed down with "krass." Meantime the dogs are watered, the girths of the horses are loosened, and the whole hunt enjoys an hour's rest before proceeding to the next

wood, whither a couple of wolves and several foxes and hares have escaped.

But enough has been said to enable the reader to form an idea of what wolf-hunting is like, so I will relate the slight adventure which befell me when wolf-hunting, and conclude with the description of another manner of following the same sport. Well, as to the adventure. But I must preface this with a single remark. In the account of the wolf-hunt above, I said that the two old wolves were allowed to escape. This is by no means always the case. When there are fifteen or twenty mounted men with dogs in the field, and the "island" is not too large, the absence of the five or six leashes of hounds launched at the two parent-wolves is not sufficient to spoil the chance of taking all the younger ones left in the forest. It is only when the forest is sparsely guarded that the old ones must be allowed to depart; otherwise, as I have explained, they are very often successful in this contrivance for the escape of the rest by drawing all the pursuit upon themselves.

On the day of which I speak we mustered in all about twenty riders. The forest where the wolves lay was appropriately named by the peasants, "Wolf's Gate," and formed the central portion of a belt of three great woods, with a few score of yards' space of undergrowth between them. This wood was completely surrounded by us, who were concealed as well as the nature of the ground permitted, and the harriers were thrown in at the far end to prevent the escape of the wolves to the adjoining wood. At the other end, whither the animals would be driven, I was posted, horse, hounds, and man concealed among the trees on the outskirts of the last group of the forest-belt. It was a post of honour, as being a very likely place for a good chance of taking a wolf; but as my hounds were young, light dogs, my nearest neighbour was a Circassian, who held a pair of splendid experienced animals, fit to tackle the biggest wolf that might present himself. Soon after the harriers were in the wood they gave tongue, and presently a



Winter in Russia.

1 Fishing through the ice.

2 A Snow-storm.

3. A Bear Hunt.

4. Netting Wolves.

5. A Wolf Hunt,

wolf broke cover at a considerable distance from me, much too far away to warrant me in leaving my post to join in the pursuit, and I sat eagerly watching the others. Suddenly my hounds sprang to their feet, and, looking in the direction to which they had faced, I saw a full-grown wolf issuing from the extremity of the wood, and making for that which I was guarding.

The distance between the woods was about eighty paces, and he was about sixty paces distant when I first caught sight of his muscular grey body rising and falling as he slowly galloped towards me. I waited a minute, and then slipped my hounds, more to attract the Circassian's attention to the wolf than anything else, for they were far too light to be of any service. The plucky little animals went straight for him, and slightly turned him from his course, so that we headed towards the Circassian, who was posted about a hundred yards away behind me to my left. Hearing my halloo, and seeing the hounds in pursuit, he rode towards me, and then, catching sight of the wolf, loosed his big hounds at it almost in its face. One noble dog without hesitation sprang right at the brute's neck, but was sent flying two good yards. The second made an attack, and fared no better; but the wolf's course was checked, and two new combatants appeared upon the scene, another hunter having galloped up. My little hounds kept making snaps at the wolf's hind-legs, as the four others with savage energy threw themselves upon him; but, in spite of all their efforts, he was gradually nearing the forest, in the depths of which he would find perfect security.

I had been somewhat left behind in the pursuit, and when I arrived on the scene the wolf was within a dozen paces of the forest, the hounds were relaxing their energy, and the hunters present did not attempt to dismount, feeling sure that the wolf would succeed in reaching shelter ere they could approach him on foot. But I was unwilling that we should be thus baffled; so, hastily springing from my horse, I drew my dagger and ran towards the group of scuffling animals. In my anxiety to head the wolf I incautiously approached it from the front, and thrust my dagger into its side. That instant with

enormous strength it threw off the hounds and made a grab at my hand; but fortunately just then one of the dogs pinched it so shrewdly in the flank as to divert it, and my hand, passing between its jaws, was merely slightly scored with its teeth, which closed a second later with a snap like a steel trap. The hound, a beautiful black one, was stretched bleeding on the grass, and the wolf continued its career towards the forest, leaving a broad red track behind.

Vexed that it had escaped, and, I am ashamed to say, burning with rage at the narrow escape I had had of losing my hand, I quickly overtook the gallant hounds, who still stuck close to their enemy, and thrusting my way close up to the wolf, again prepared to dispute the passage. Instinctively he turned his fury on me as the worst of his foes, and seizing my leg in his strong jaws, bit clean through stout riding-boots, trousers and all, to the bone. I thought the bone was broken, and hacked rather wildly at his mouth, nearly severing a tooth, and then plunged the weapon to the hilt in his mouth. At this moment our Circassian attendant, seeing my fix, ran to my help, and also stabbed the ferocious beast, who then quitted his hold on my leg, staggered several paces, and fell dead on the trampled grass. Fortunately my injuries were not serious, which the enfeebled state of the wolf accounts for—having already received a wound which of itself was fatal.

"Lucky for you he didn't catch your hand, sir," says old Nikita on hearing of it later on; "he would have cut it off as clean as shears would." And it is true, for the strength of the wolf's jaw is such that he snaps the thigh-bone of a horse with a single effort. Most of the hounds were bleeding pretty freely, but only one received very bad wounds; so after washing and dressing them a little we were all fit to continue the hunt till its close a couple of hours later. The wolf was a fine creature, in the prime of its strength, and slightly above the average in size. I had him partially stuffed as a hearth-rug, and he now lies grinning at me as I sit at my writing-table.

And now for the other mode of hunting, which I must describe in a few words.

It is carried on in the late autumn by night, and requires unlimited power of standing perfectly silent for a long time. The hunters start about ten o'clock at night, carrying with them in the *telega* their guns and—a sucking-pig in a bag! They take up their places in the outskirts of a forest, at about a dozen yards from one another. The number of the party generally consists of two or three, as more are unnecessary. One of the party takes charge of poor piggy, who at once commences to express his disapproval of the change from warm straw to the frosty ground by loud squealing. If piggy shows signs of resigning himself to fate and ceasing his vain lamentations, an energetic poke into the bag causes a renewal of the concert. The wolves are attracted by the noise, which they think proceeds from some belated little porker, and approach in the direction of the sound. The hunters meanwhile, carefully concealed, keep the most absolute silence, not moving a finger (except that which keeps piggy in good voice), and await their approach. At length the burning eyes of the wolves may be seen glaring through the darkness, and when they approach near enough each man aims at those points of light and fires. Of course, this sport is somewhat dangerous, especially if carried on late in the year, when the wolves are emboldened by hunger. It is bitterly cold work, too, and something besides cold sometimes sends a sort of shiver down your back when standing about in the dark forest with the blood-curdling howling of the wolves close at hand.

Hunting of all kinds almost is to be had in the Russian Empire. Besides wolves there are bears, elks, lynxes, many kinds of deer, boars, sable, foxes, and innumerable hares; while snipe, blackcock, woodcock, wild duck, partridges, and grouse are also exceedingly plentiful.

The Russians, as a rule, are not so fond of sport as we; but those who are lovers of hunting enter into it with the greatest ardour. From 400 to 1,000 roubles, *i.e.*, £40 to £100, are occasionally paid for a single hound; and one well-known gentleman in the Government of Voronezh has taken as many as thirty-six wolves, sixty-seven foxes, and a hundred-and-forty hares in the course of one hunting season!

MY MONKEY JANE.

JANE, or Jinnie, as she was more frequently called—one of the common brown Indian monkeys—was captured one day during a heavy flood that had risen too suddenly to permit of her escaping from the fig-tree in which she had passed the night to the higher grounds, and brought to my bungalow in a very wet and dragged condition by some boatmen.

She had resisted as much as possible, and sundry bites and scratches on the legs and arms of her captors bore testimony to her gallant struggle for liberty. She had by no means come off "scot free," and was considerably bruised and knocked about, but was no sooner turned out of the basket into my verandah than she again renewed hostilities, and it was some time ere I succeeded in fixing a belt and light chain on her, and securing her to one of the bamboo posts.

In less than a week she was reconciled to her new situation, and became friendly and companionable, but, probably recollecting she owed her captivity to coloured folk, she, from the first, showed an unconquerable aversion to natives, and many a bite did unwary visitors receive when coming within range of her chain. The bare-legged

servants kept a respectful distance, and I had to put up a notice warning all comers to avoid her particular end of the verandah.

To European visitors and dogs Jinnie was most affable, and seemed never so happy as when allowed to examine human strangers—if of the right complexion—or the numerous canine acquaintances they almost always brought with them.

Her attentions to the former were peculiar. She would commence by climbing all over them, and, if allowed, would turn everything out of their pockets, winding up by popping in her head to see nothing had been left behind. Then the hat would be removed, not by any means with a gentle hand—or paw, if you prefer it—and the hair and head thoroughly explored.

One of my visitors was perfectly bald, and, for protection from the fierce Indian sun, wore a wig. The first day of his acquaintance he seated himself in a chair for the usual examination. Pockets having been overhauled, and their contents scattered on the floor, off went the hat, and Jane's busy fingers were soon at work among the hair. A somewhat sharper tug than usual, and down slid Jinnie to the floor with the wig in her hand. The astonishment de-

picted in her face was most amusing: she turned her prize over and over, then inside out, holding it out at arm's length, gazing now at it and then into our faces with a most comical air of doubt and uncertainty. At length, having satisfied her curiosity as far as the wig was concerned, she laid it aside, and, mounting the owner's shoulders, proceeded to inspect the smooth, polished pate, standing on tiptoe, and passing her hands slowly over the surface of the head, as if studying phrenology. Evidently quite at a loss to account for the phenomenon, she sat quiet for a few minutes, buried in reflection; then a sudden idea seemed to strike her, for, springing on to my back, she commenced tugging and hauling at my hair with a vigour that brought the tears into my eyes, and ere my friend could pull her off all four paws were filled with locks of my hair. Both of us laughed heartily at the incident, but for a long time afterwards no one could allow Jinnie to interfere with his hair, as she was evidently under the impression that it ought to come off, and would try her best to remove it.

Like most of her tribe, she was very mischievous, but seldom indulged that propensity when any one was looking at her.

When she did manage to get hold of anything she would pull it in pieces or break it as quickly as possible, and if interrupted would sit upon it—if not too large to be hidden in that way—or drop it over the side of the verandah, fold her hands, and put on a demure, unconcerned look the very picture of innocence.

But, as sometimes happened, Jinnie would get loose, and then there was no end of a bother. No native would attempt to catch her, and if I happened to be out in the plantation, or otherwise engaged, Jinnie had the premises all to herself, and generally contrived to do a tremendous amount of damage meantime.

One hot morning I had ordered the breakfast-table to be brought out into the porch, expecting some visitors, and was engaged among the tea-pickers, nearly a mile from home, when a breathless messenger came running up with the information that Jinnie had broken her belt, and, to use the man's exaggerated words, was "breaking the house up."

No use listening to details, so away I galloped, as hard as the pony could lay legs to the ground, reaching the bungalow just as my expected guests arrived, and a pretty state of affairs awaited us.

Cups, saucers, spoons, forks, had been recklessly thrown in all directions. The once snow-white cloth, half dragged from the table, was stained all over with many hues. Here lay the remains of the butter-dish side by side with a broken pickle-bottle. A jar of marmalade, turned upside down in the centre of the table, kept company with the empty cruet-bottles, for the mischievous little creature, to complete the damage, had pulled out, or off, all the stoppers, and emptied the contents into the general muddle, so that mustard, pepper, oil, and vinegar formed a huge *splodge* in the middle of the cloth, and it needed but a glance to see that the horrible mess had been rolled in by the author of the damage.

My grey-haired servant looked the picture of dismay, as, assisted by the cook, who had armed himself with the kitchen-ladle, they gathered up the fragments and rearranged the breakfast-table. As for Jinnie, she, I knew, was off to the jungle, and would not return till sunset, so we made the best of matters. It was very late when her ladyship came home, creeping slowly into the verandah and eyeing me with sidelong glances as I sat pretending to read a newspaper. She looked about as if expecting to see some portions of the morning's wreck, but, not finding any, mustered up confidence to perch herself on the verandah railings at a safe distance, assuming her innocent air, till, by a sudden spring, I managed to catch her by the ear, then, taking her to where the broken remains had been set aside for the purpose, Jinnie received her reward from a light cane.

On these occasions she always made a terrible do, but, as the punishment was never very severe, I am afraid it had no lasting effect, the delights of being in mischief being too strong to be resisted, so I had to depend more on daily examination of her chain than punishing her for misdeeds committed when loose—going on the principle of "prevention being better than cure."

As she seemed fond of playing with dogs and cats, I, with considerable difficulty, obtained a half-grown baby monkey, hoping she would take a fancy to it, and that its possession would keep her out of mischief, but, after fondling it for some time she commenced to bang the poor little thing about in such an outrageous manner that I had to take it away from her.

Dogs and cats—full grown—seemed to take to Jinnie on first introduction, and though resenting her strenuous attempts to

pull their tails out by the roots, which was her way of greeting such new acquaintances, became wary enough to take care of such appendages, and generally romped and frolicked to her and their hearts' content. Puppies and kittens, when unaccompanied by their mothers, were very roughly handled, being pulled about till they lost their tempers, as most babies will when bullied, and then dropped over the side of the verandah or swung aside by their tails or ears, whichever their tormentor considered handiest.

Strong as Jinnie was for her size, and quick at running up her post to avoid the consequences of a too vigorous onslaught on her victims, she did not always escape the well-deserved penalty of her impudence, having the life nearly shaken out of her one afternoon by an old bull-terrier, whose stumpy tail, after vainly tugging at with both hands without apparently disturbing its owner's temper, she seized with her teeth. This proved too much for the usually well-behaved elderly doggie, who turned and shook her as if she were a rat, till her cries and shrieks brought us out to her rescue. She never presumed to meddle with that old visitor or his tail after that lesson, and whenever he appeared kept at the top of her post.

On her voyage to England, Jinnie nearly found a watery grave.

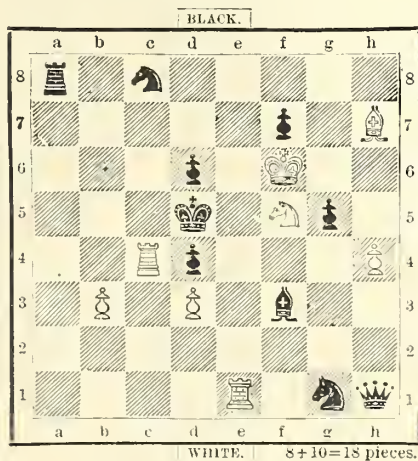
I usually chained her up on the roof of one of the sheep-pens, where she could get at nothing, and was out of every one's way. Unfortunately, one of the crew brought up a globe of gold-fish one morning that he had purchased at Malta, and, not noticing Jinnie, unwarily placed it within her reach. Jinnie, probably thinking the fish had not room enough in the globe, dabbled in her paws, and ere I could interfere had thrown them all overboard, and I had very great difficulty in preventing the owner pitching her after them, which, in his passion at the occurrence, he endeavoured to do. Jinnie found so many opportunities of indulging in mischief in England that I was obliged to send her to a local zoological garden, where I am permitted to visit her as often as I wish, and she seems contented, and agrees well with her numerous companions in the spacious monkey-house.

O. W.

CHESS.

Problem No. 195.

BY MRS. SOPHIE SCHETT.



White to play, and mate in four (4) moves.

GO-BAN.

(See vol. vi., page 6, and vol. viii., page 366.)

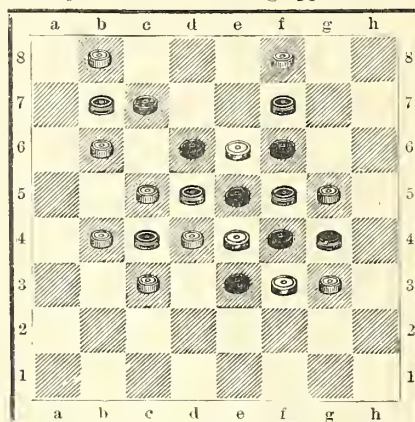
GAME No. 7.

Played last month between L. S. and H. M., the latter playing the white men.

Black (L. S.) placed his first man on the square f5, then White placed one on d4. Black now placed his second man on e5, and White followed with his second on e4. The entire record of the game is this:—

BLACK.	WHITE.
1. f5	d4
2. e5	e4
3. d5	e5 (a)
4. f4	f3
5. d6	g3 (b)
6. e7	b8
7. f6	b6
8. e3	b4
9. f7	f8
10. g4	e6
11. b7	c3
12. c4	g5 (c)

All the men are now placed, and the board presents the following appearance.



The moving of the men was the following.

13. f7 g7	e5 b5
14. e3 d3 (d)	e3 b3
15. d3 e3	b5 e5
16. f4 e3 (c)	f3 f4
17. g7 f7	f8 e7
18. e7 e6	g3 f2
19. e6 b5	b8 e7
20. b7 a6	e7 d7
21. c3 d3	f2 e2
22. f7 g7	b3 c3
23. g7 g6	b6 a5
24. g6 h5	f4 f3
25. d3 d2	c3 d3
26. h5 h4	a5 b6
27. f5 f4	g5 f5 (f)
28. h4 g5	f5 g6
29. f6 f5	g6 h5
30. f5 g6	h5 h6
31. g4 f5	h6 h5
32. g6 h6 = five.	

NOTES.

(a) White is obliged to place a man on e5 or g5 to prevent Black from getting four men in a line in the fifth row, for as soon as he were to get them, White could not hinder him from adding the fifth and thus winning the game.

(b) White is again compelled to stop the threatened row in the diagonal.

(c) Obligated to play the last man there (not on b3), else Black would win in two more moves by playing the man from f6 to g5, and g4 to h5.

(d) He must play this or e4 b3, for should he play f6 e7, White would win thus:—14, e3 b3, 15, e4 e3 (to prevent d4 e3), b3 c4, and then 16, g7 f7, b5 a4 = five.

(e) Compelled, to block the diagonal.

(f) A bad move, which allows Black to win in five more moves.

Correspondence.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.—As a rule under-stewards begin life as boys in restaurants or hotels. In towns like Liverpool their masters get to know the stewards of the ships, and a word from them puts them in the running. You can, of course, apply direct to the company, but your want of experience would tell against you. Often, however, the captains fill up the vacancies from outsiders. If you want to work your passage out it will do you no harm to go as an under-steward; if you want to stay at sea better ship as a boy, and apply at the Mercantile Marine Office as to how to do it.

CUTTER (Leith).—There are Biddle's "Model Yachting," published by Wilson, 156, Minorities; and Grosvenor's "Model Yachts," published by L. U. Gill, 170, Strand.

F. POWELL.—1. The letters R. S. V. P. are the initials of "Répondez s'il vous plait," which, being translated, is "Please reply." The initials were adopted to save time, but it does not seem to occur to those who use them that it takes less time still to write in plain English. 2. About a sovereign, reckoning your own time as unpaid.

R. J. WILSON.—The conditions vary, but as a rule candidates have to be over 5ft. 7in., and older than eighteen.

PENSEROSO.—It is not our custom or intention in these pages to encourage boys to waste their time in dabbling in party politics.

SLOGGER.—Mr. A. W. Fenner, of 10, Seymour Street, Enston Square, charges ten shillings for fitting a new blade to an old handle, and six shillings and sixpence for fitting a new handle to an old blade. Binding a bat handle costs ninepence.

C. E. BROWNE.—Finish the cleaning of the brass with a rag made slightly greasy with vaseline or paraffin. Any other oil will do harm.

MANCUNIENTS.—There is nothing illegal in your omitting to sign yourself with all your Christian names or initials; but in official documents it is as well to give them, so as to secure identification.

A. C. JAMES.—John Gibson, the sculptor, measured the Queen for a statue, and according to him she was then exactly five feet high. What her height is now we do not know, but it is probably less than that.

CHARLIE.—Too many questions. It matters not what balls you use for juggling, but they are best of the same weight as brass ones. The easiest way of identifying stamps is by the illustrated catalogue. Glass tanks are the best for aquariums.

ZEALANDIA.—1. The three islands in the Straits of Corea forming Port Hamilton are Sodo, a mile broad and three and a half miles long; Sanhodo, half as big; and Observatory Island, which is very small. 2. Labuan has a population of 6,000; Singapore has 155,000; Hong Kong has 180,000; Socotra has 4,000. 3. There is only one railway across Panama at present.

ULSTER.—Try a course of machine drawing at one of the Science and Art Classes. You will there become acquainted with a branch of the work, and with people likely to put you in the right path. The cost is merely nominal. The nearest class you can find on referring to the Science Directory, price sixpence, post free, from the Secretary, Science and Art Department, South Kensington, London.

R. W. B.—1. Float a wash of milk over the drawing. 2. The clubs should weigh about sixteen pounds the pair, and cost something under ten shillings.

A. W. FIELD.—1. Edward I. was a much greater king in every way than Edward III., and much more successful. 2. The House of York claimed through Lionel of Antwerp. The House of Lancaster claimed through John of Gaunt, and Lionel was the third son of Edward III., while John was the fourth.

F. C. MARRIOTT.—See page 445 of our fourth volume for an article on Silkworms.

W. JONES.—Why not try? We fancy your patronymic would be rather against your being taken for a Scotchman. The privilege generally goes by paternal descent, but much depends on the state of the recruiting market.

CROMWELL.—Too long to answer. All the books but Schiller, Burton, and Spedding out of print. Give the list to a local secondhand bookseller, or advertise it in "Exchange and Mart" or "Publishers' Circular." All the books are in the British Museum; most are in the London Library. Has not your free library several of them?

E. B. T.—You must join the School of Naval Architecture at South Kensington.

FRED LANYON.—Yes; magpies will learn to speak, but the custom of cutting the tongue is brutal and useless. They will eat anything, but should not be kept in a cage. Dock one wing, and let them run about.

M. D.—"You cannot restrict a word to its original meaning in this hurried, loosely-thinking world." You would put us in never-ending strife with our contributors. And why?—or, rather, how? However, thanks.



KEEP THE
POT A BOILING!

THE BOYS' OWN PAPER

No. 470.—Vol. X.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1888.

Price One Penny.
[ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]



THE MIDDY AND THE MOORS:

AN ALGERINE STORY.

By R. M. BALLANTYNE,

Author of "The Prairie Chief," "Twice Bought,"
etc., etc.

CHAPTER II.—AMONG PIRATES—EN-
SLAVED.

WHEN George Foster was again permitted to go on deck the sight that he beheld was not calculated to comfort him in his misfortunes.

Several Moorish seamen were going

"Fool, Bind that prisoner!"

about with bared legs and arms swishing water on the decks and swabbing up the blood with which they were bespattered. Most of these men were more or less wounded and bandaged, for the crew of the merchantman they had attacked had offered a desperate resistance, knowing well the fate in store for them if captured.

The said merchantman, a large brig, sailed close alongside of the pirate vessel with a prize crew on board. Her own men, who were Russians, had been put in chains in the fore part of their vessel under the fore-castle, so as to be out of sight. Her officers and several passengers had been removed to the pirate's quarter-deck. Among them were an old gentleman of dignified bearing, and an elderly lady who seemed to be supported, physically as well as mentally, by a tall, dark-complexioned, noble-looking girl, who was evidently the daughter of the old gentleman, though whether also the daughter of the elderly lady young Foster could not discover, there being little or no resemblance between them. The memory of his mother and sister strongly inclined the sympathetic midshipman to approach the party and offer words of consolation to the ladies. As he advanced to them for that purpose, a doubt as to which language he should use assailed him. French, he knew, was the language most likely to be understood, but a girl with such magnificent black eyes must certainly be Spanish! His knowledge of Spanish was about equal to that of an ill-trained parrot, but what of that? Was he not a Briton, whose chief characteristic is to go in for anything and stick at nothing?

We do not venture to write down what he said, but when he had said it the blank look of the elderly lady and the peculiar look of the girl induced him to repeat the speech in his broken—his very much broken—French, whereupon the old gentleman turned to him gravely and said,

"My wife is English, an' my datter is Danish—no, not joost—vell, she is 'af-an'-af. Speak to dem in your nattiv tong."

"You are not English, anyhow, old boy," thought Foster, as he turned with a mingled feeling of confusion and recklessness to the elder lady.

"Pardon me, madam," he said, "but from the appearance of—of—your—"

He was interrupted at this point by the captain, who, flushed and blood-bespattered from the recent fight, came aft with a drawn cimitar in his hand, and sternly ordered the young midshipman to go forward.

It placed a humiliating position to be placed in; yet, despite the "stick-at-nothing" spirit, he felt constrained to obey, but did so, nevertheless, with an air of defiant ferocity which relieved his feelings to some extent. The said feelings were utterly ignored by the pirate captain, who did not condescend even to look at him after the first glance, but turned to the other captives and ordered them, in rather less stern tones, to "go below," an order which was promptly obeyed.

On reaching the fore part of the vessel, Foster found several of the crew engaged in bandaging each other's

wounds, and, from the clumsy way in which they went to work, it was very clear that they were much more accustomed to inflict than to bandage wounds.

Now it must be told that, although George Foster was not a surgeon, he had an elder brother who was, and with whom he had associated constantly while he was studying and practising for his degree; hence he became acquainted with many useful facts and modes of action connected with the healing art, of which the world at large is ignorant. Perceiving that one of the pirates was bungling a very simple operation, he stepped forward, and, with that assurance which results naturally from the combination of conscious power and "cheek," took up the dressing of the wound.

At first the men seemed inclined to resent the interference, but when they saw that the "Christian" knew what he was about, and observed how well and swiftly he did the work, they stood aside and calmly submitted.

Foster was interrupted, however, in the midst of his philanthropic work by Peter the Great, who came forward and touched him on the shoulder.

"Sorry to 'trupt you, sar, but you come wid me."

"Mayn't I finish this operation first?" said Foster, looking up.

"No, sar. My orders is prumptory."

Our amateur surgeon dropped the bandage indignantly and followed the negro, who led him down into the hold, at the farther and dark end of which he saw several wounded men lying, and beside them one or two whose motionless and straightened figures seemed to indicate that death had relieved them from earthly troubles.

Amongst these men he spent the night and all next day, with only a couple of biscuits and a mug of water to sustain him. Next evening Peter the Great came down and bade him follow him to the other end of the hold.

"Now, sar, you go in dare," said the negro, stopping and pointing to a small door in the bulkhead, inside of which was profound darkness.

Foster hesitated and looked at his big conductor.

"Bey orders, sar!" said the negro, in a loud, stern voice of command. Then, stooping as if to open the little door, he added, in a low voice, "Don' be a fool, massa. *Sub-mit!* Das de word, if you don' want a whackin'. It's a friend advises you. Dere's one oder prisoner dere, but he's wounded, an' won't hurt you. Go in! won't you?"

Peter the Great accompanied the last words with a violent thrust that sent the hapless middy headlong into the dark hole, but as he closed and fastened the door he muttered, "Don' mind my leetle ways, massa. You know I's bound to be a hyperkrite."

Having thus relieved his conscience, Peter returned to the deck, leaving the poor prisoner to rise and, as a first consequence, to hit his head on the beams above him.

The hole into which he had been thrust was truly a "black hole," though neither as hot nor as deadly as that of Calcutta. Extending his arms cautiously, he touched the side of the ship

with his left hand; with the other he felt about for some time, but reached nothing until he had advanced a step, when his foot touched something on the floor, and he bent down to feel it, but shrank hastily back on touching what he perceived at once was a human form.

"Pardon me, friend, whoever you are," he said, quickly, "I did not mean to—I did not know—are you badly hurt?"

But no reply came from the wounded man—not even a groan.

A vague suspicion crossed Foster's mind. The man might be dying of his wounds. He spoke to him again in French and Spanish, but still got no reply! Then he listened intently for his breathing, but all was as silent as the tomb. With an irresistible impulse, yet instinctive shudder, he laid his hand on the man and passed it up until it reached the face. The silence was then explained. The face was growing cold and rigid in death.

Drawing back hastily, the poor youth shouted to those outside to let them know what had occurred, but no one paid the least attention to him. He was about to renew his cries more loudly, when the thought occurred that perhaps they might attribute them to fear. This kept him quiet, and he made up his mind to endure in silence.

If there had been a ray of light, however feeble, in the hold, he thought his condition would have been more bearable, for then he could have faced the lifeless clay and looked at it; but to know that it was there, within a foot of him, without his being able to see it, or to form any idea of what it was like, made the case terrible indeed. Of course he drew back from it as far as the little space allowed, and crushed himself up against the side of the vessel; but that did no good, for the idea occurred to his excited brain that it might possibly come to life again, rise up, and plunge against him. At times this thought took such possession of him that he threw up his arms to defend himself from attack, and uttered a half-suppressed cry of terror.

At last nature asserted herself, and he slept, sitting on the floor and leaning partly against the vessel's side, partly against the bulkhead. But horrible dreams disturbed him. The corpse became visible, the eyes glared at him, the blood-stained face worked convulsively, and he awoke with a shriek, followed immediately by a sigh of relief on finding that it was all a dream. Then the horror came again, as he suddenly remembered that the dead man was still there, a terrible reality!

At last pure exhaustion threw him into a dreamless and profound slumber. The plunging of the little craft as it flew southward before a stiff breeze did not disturb him, and he did not awake until some one rudely seized his arm late on the following day. Then, in the firm belief that his dream had come true at last, he uttered a tremendous yell and struggled to rise, but a powerful hand held him down, and a dark lantern revealed a coal-black face gazing at him.

"Hallo! massa, hold on. I did tink you mus' be gone dead, for I holler'd in at you 'nuff to bust de kittle-drum ob your ear—if you hab one!"

"Look there, Peter," said Foster, pointing to the recumbent figure, while he wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"Ah! poor feller. He gone de way ob all flesh; but he goed sooner dan dere was any occasion for—tanks to de captain."

As he spoke he held the lantern over the dead man and revealed the face of a youth in Eastern garb, on whose head there was a terrible sword-cut. As they looked at the sad spectacle, and endeavoured to arrange the corpse, the negro explained that the poor fellow had been a Greek captive who to save his life had joined the pirates and become a Mussulman; but, on thinking over it, had returned to the Christian faith and refused to take part in the bloody work which they were required to do. It was his refusal to fight on the occasion of the recent attack on the merchantman that had induced the captain to cut him down. He had been put into the prison in the hold, and carelessly left there to bleed to death.

"Now, you come along, massa," said the negro, taking up the lantern, "we's all goin' on shore."

"On shore! Where have we got to?"

"To Algiers, de city ob pirits; de hotbed ob wickedness; de home ob de Moors an' Turks an' Cabyles; and de cuss ob de whole world."

Poor Foster's heart sank on hearing this, for he had heard of the hopeless slavery to which thousands of Christians had been consigned there in time past, and his recent experience of Moors had not tended to improve his opinion of them.

A feeling of despair impelled him to seize the negro by the arm as he was about to ascend the ladder and stop him.

"Peter," he said, "I think you have a friendly feeling towards me, because you've called me massa more than once though you have no occasion to do so."

"Dat's 'cause I'm fond o' you. I always was fond o' a nice smood young babby face, an' I tooked a fancy to you de moment I see you knock Joe Spinks into de lee scuppers."

"So—he was an Englishman that I treated so badly, eh?"

"Yes, massa, on'y you didn't treat him bad 'nuff. But you obsarve dat I on'y calls you massa w'en we's alone an' friendly like. W'en we's in public I calls you 'sar' an' speak gruff an' shove you into black-holes."

"And why do you act so, Peter?"

"'Cause, don't you see, I's a hyperkrite. I tole you dat before."

"Well I can guess what you mean. You don't want to appear too friendly? Just so. Well, now, I have got nobody to take my part here, so as you are a free man I wish you would keep an eye on me when we go ashore, and see where they send me, and speak a word for me when it is in your power. You see, they'll give me up for drowned at home and never find out that I'm here."

"A free man!" repeated the negro with an expansion of his mouth that is indescribable. "You tink I's a free man! but I's a slabe, same as yourself, on'y de difference an' dat dere's nobody to ransom me, so dey don't boder deir heads bout me s'long as I do my work. If I don't do my work I'm whacked; if I rebel and kick up a shindy I'm

whacked wuss; if I tries to run away I'm whacked till I'm dead. Das all. But I's not free. No no! not at all! Howsever I's free-an-easy, an' dat make de pirits fond o' me, which goes a long way, for dere's nuffin' like lub!"

Foster heartily agreed with the latter sentiment and added:—

"Well, now, Peter, I will say no more, for as you profess to be fond of me, and as I can truly say the same in regard to you, we may be sure that each will help the other if he gets the chance. But, tell me, are you really one of the crew of this pirate vessel?"

"No, massa, on'y for dis viage. I b'longs to a old sinner called Hassan, what libs in de country, not far from de town. He not a bad feller, but he's obs'nit—oh! as obs'nit as a deaf an' dumb mule. If you want 'im to go one way just tell him to go toder way—an' you've got 'im!"

At that moment the captain's voice was heard shouting down the hatchway, demanding to know what detained the negro and his prisoners. He spoke in that jumble of languages in use at that time among the Mediterranean nations called *Lingua Franca*, for the negro did not understand Arabic.

"Comin', captain, comin'," cried the negro, in his own peculiar English—which was, indeed, his mother tongue, for he had been born in the United States of America. "Now, den, sar" (to Foster), "w'en you goin' to move you stumps? Up wid you!"

Peter emphasised his orders with a real kick, which expedited his prisoner's ascent, and, at the same time, justified the negro's claim to be a thoroughly-paced "hyperkrite!"

"Where's the other one?" demanded the captain, angrily.

"Escaped, captain!" answered Peter.

"How! You must have helped him," cried the captain, drawing his ever-ready sword and pointing it at the breast of the negro, who fell upon his knees, clasped his great hands, and rolled his eyes in an apparent agony of terror.

"Don't, captain. I isn't wuth killin', an' w'en I's gone, who'd cook for you like me? De man escaped by jumpin' out ob his body. He's gone dead!"

"Fool!" muttered the pirate, returning his sword to its sheath, "bind that prisoner, and have him and the others ready to go on shore directly."

In a few seconds all the prisoners were ranged between the cabin hatchway and the mast. The hands of most of the men being loosely tied, to prevent trouble in case desperation should impel any of them to assault their captors, but the old Dane and the females were left unfettered.

And now George Foster beheld, for the first time, the celebrated city, which was, at that period, the terror of the merchant vessels of all nations that had dealings with the Mediterranean shores. A small pier and breakwater enclosed a harbour which was crowded with boats and shipping. From this harbour the town rose abruptly on the side of a steep hill, and was surrounded by walls of great strength, which bristled with cannon. The houses were small and square-looking, and in the midst, here and there, clusters of date-palms told of the almost tropical cha-

racter of the climate, while numerous domes, minarets, and crescents told of the Moor and the religion of Mohammed.

But religion in its true sense had little footing in that piratical city, which subsisted on robbery and violence, while cruelty and injustice of the grossest kind were rampant. Whatever Islamism may have taught them, it did not produce men or women who held the golden rule to be a virtue, and certainly few practised it. Yet we would not be understood to mean that there were none who did so. As there were Christians in days of old, even in Caesar's household, so there existed men and women who were distinguished by the Christian graces, even in the Pirate City. Even there God had not left Himself without a witness.

As the vessel slowly entered the harbour under a very light breeze, she was boarded by several stately officers in the picturesque costume—turbans, red leathern boots, etc.—peculiar to the country. After speaking a few minutes with the captain, one of the officers politely addressed the old Dane and his family through an interpreter; but as they spoke in subdued tones Foster could not make out what was said. Soon he was interrupted by a harsh order from an unknown Moor in an unknown tongue.

An angry order invariably raised in our hero the spirit of rebellion. He flushed and turned a fierce look on the Moor, but that haughty and grave individual was accustomed to such looks. He merely repeated his order in a quiet voice, at the same time translated it by pointing to the boat alongside. Foster felt that discretion was the better part of valour, all the more that there stood at the Moor's back five or six powerful Arabs, who seemed quite ready to enforce his instructions.

The poor middy glanced round to see if his only friend, Peter the Great, was visible, but he was not; so, with a flushed countenance at thus being compelled to put his pride in his pocket, he jumped into the boat, not caring very much whether he should break his neck by doing so with tied hands, or fall into the sea and end his life in a shark's maw!

In a few minutes he was landed on the mole or pier, and made to join a band of captives, apparently from many nations, who already stood waiting there.

Immediately afterwards the band was ordered to move on, and as they marched through the great gateway in the massive walls Foster felt as if he were entering the portals of Dante's Inferno, and had left all hope behind. But his feelings misled him. Hope, thank God! is not easily extinguished in the human breast. As he tramped along the narrow and winding streets, which seemed to him an absolute labyrinth, he began to take interest in the curious sights and sounds that greeted him on every side, and his mind was thus a little taken off himself.

And there was indeed much there to interest a youth who had never seen Eastern manners or customs before. Narrow and steep though the streets were—in some cases so steep that they formed flights of what may be styled broad and shallow stairs—they were

crowded with bronzed men in varied Eastern costume; Moors in fez and gay vest and red morocco slippers; Turks with turban and pipe; Cabyles from the mountains; Arabs from the plains; water-carriers with jar on shoulder; Jews in sombre robes; Jewesses with rich shawls and silk kerchiefs as headgear; donkeys with panniers that almost blocked the way; camels, and veiled women, and many other strange sights that our hero had up to that time only seen in picture-books.

Presently the band of captives halted before a small door which was thickly studded with large nails. It seemed to

form the only opening in a high dead wall, with the exception of two holes about a foot square, which served as windows. This was the Bagnio, or prison, in which the slaves were put each evening after the day's labour was over, there to feed and rest on the stone floor until daylight should call them forth again to renewed toil. It was a gloomy courtyard, with cells around it in which the captives slept. A fountain in the middle kept the floor damp and seemed to prove an attraction to various centipedes, scorpions, and other noisome creatures which were crawling about.

Here the captives just arrived had

their bonds removed, and were left to their own devices, each having received two rolls of black bread before the jailor retired and locked them up for the night.

Taking possession of an empty cell George Foster sat down on the stone floor and gazed at the wretched creatures around him, many of whom were devouring their black bread with ravenous haste. The poor youth could hardly believe his eyes, and it was some time before he could convince himself that the whole thing was not a dream but a terrible reality.

(To be continued.)

EDRIC THE NORSEMAN:

A TALE OF ADVENTURE AND DISCOVERY.

By J. F. HODGETTS,

Late Professor and Crown Examiner at Moscow, Author of "Harold, the Boy-Earl," "Ivan Dobroff," "Kormak the Viking," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVI.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

THE more important chieftains of the island were called together at the Ting, or All-Ting, where important matters had to be decided. Magni was chosen this year judge and pontiff-chief, uniting in one person the powers of legislator, priest, and general. He was a most respected leader, not only for his courage and experience in war, but for his wisdom and uncommon learning, which fitted him to be a magistrate in peace. We have described the assembly of the Icelanders, called by themselves the Ting, so we need only mention here that the assembly on the present grave occasion was more than usually solemn.

The judges were assembled early; the parties who had been accused—Freydisa and her husband—had their seats before the stone of judgment, within the inner ring. Haco Oloffson, a known Norwegian lawyer, had come on purpose to conduct the prosecution, because the people murdered had been Norwegians.

We have no relish for such horrid details as were brought forward at that memorable trial. No one came forward as compurgator to vouch for this unhappy woman's innocence, and the only point her advocate (Lars Bersison of Stromness) could bring forward in her favour (namely, her being a Christian) told against her. "For," said Magni, "the light of Christian truth shining upon her soul should have illumined it in verity, and may not now be taken as a cloak to hide a crime that not a single pagan on the island would ever have stooped to stain his or her soul withal."

Here he was interrupted by the plaudits of the whole assembly. Then he continued: "Her doom should certainly have been a cruel death by torture, but, as a Christian judge, I am opposed to using torture to a Christian. Nor would I cause a woman to be put to death in public, whether of pagan or of Christian faith. But she has murdered barbarously five Christian women, and besides, by means of wily arts, induced her husband to slay Norwegian men, whom, by the laws of Iceland and

of Norway, he ought to have protected and rewarded.

"Under these circumstances, she is dead to us—she is no fit companion for our Northern women. So let her die as to her civil life. Her doom is banishment. There, where the troll, her grandmother, once lived, shall she remain. Two slaves shall be appointed her attendants, but she shall never leave the limits of that small estate on pain of death. And should she disregard this solemn judgment, and venture to transgress those limits, her death shall be as horrible as man can think—she shall be thrown alive down to the everliving fires of Mount Hecla!"

This sentence was received with due applause. Then came the trial of her husband, Thorward, who, with his usual blunt indifference, acknowledged that he slew the two Norwegians and their train.

"Wert thou not induced thereto by thy wife's counsel?"

"I am here upon my trial as to whether Helgi and Finnboegi and their men were slain by me or not. The question is not *why* I slew them, but *did* I slay them. I confess I slew them, which, as I think, ends the matter! As to my wife; what says the Havamal? 'Trust not the words of women, for their hearts have been made like the wheel that turns round, and caprice and inconstancy rule woman's breast!' Now if the old pagan writer could warn so wisely as this, how much better must the advice be of Christian teachers? I have, however, great respect for women; their thoughts are often lovely, but the household where the woman rules falls to the ground. Lo! I have said."

The queer mixture of paganism and Christianity displayed in this speech, the respect to woman and the contempt of her rule, were so oddly blended that in a more modern assembly there would have been a laugh, but those grave warriors and merchants never smiled. The question of the guilt of Thorward ceased with his confession, but his

punishment? This was a matter for profound consideration, nor was it soon that all the persons present came to a final understanding on the verdict. At last it was decreed that, from certain evidence which had been tendered, especially from the clear, straightforward testimony of Edric Sigvaldson, it appeared that Thorward had been led to slay those men by no malicious feelings of his own, but out of honour and respect for female dignity, displayed by yielding to his wife's malicious promptings, and therefore, though to blame for what he had thus done under her influence, he was not so to blame as would have been the case had he performed the cruel deed to gratify his own revengeful passions. It had been pointed out how he had steadily refused to slay the women, and Freydisa's act was perfectly in unison with Edric's evidence in Thorward's favour.

"Therefore be it decreed," said Magni, in his summing up and sentence, "that Thorward pays the usual fines for manslaughter according to the rank of each of those he slew, and seeing these were many he must be banished from the Scandinavian lands and sail to any other land he pleases."

This sentence was applauded in the usual way, and then another cause was called. This was a civil action brought by Edric Sigvaldson, a swain (*i.e.*, a youth—a young unmarried man), against his kinsman Ulf Erikson, who held the lands which formerly belonged to Sigvald Erikson, brother to Ulf.

We know the circumstances of the case, and so pass over all the opening part in which the claims of Edric were set forth. Ulf asked permission to defend himself, which was accorded him at once.

"Yarl Magni, chieftains, warriors, merchants, friends. I stand before you here in open ting accused of robbing Edric of his patrimony, whereas I only take my right, namely, the half of what his father left. My father (whom the saints preserve) refused me what should have been given me as well as to my

brothers. Vile tongues had slandered me, and I became a beggar. But oh, the justice of the Scandinavian law! I can assert my claim to half my brother's land (after his death), which I have done—the other half is Edric's.

"My nephew comes from very far. So far indeed that no one knows the Noman'sland he says he has been helpful to discover. I doubt the story. I believe him poor and cunning, pretending to be rich and simple. My reason for this thought is that I met him very shortly after his return to Iceland clad in his proper garb—a poor and wretched tunic. I jeered him somewhat on his humble dress, whereon he told a story of having used that poor disguise to pay a visit in!

"I saw through that at once, for the clothes sat too well upon him to have been borrowed from another. And shortly afterwards I saw him in the borrowed plumes which he now wears, and which sit so abominably on him that all the world can see that they were never made for him!"

"Ulf Eirikson," said Magni, "I can't see thy drift. This anecdote is very silly and irrelevant. What can it matter to a Scandinavian ting how a man dresses?"

"Much, Yarl Magni; much. That dress was only borrowed just to make men think that he was able to repurchase for himself that land which I now hold. His object was to get the whole from me, and by his haughty air and borrowed plumage to pay no money down, passing his word to pay within a certain time, intending to elude all payment by some trick! He owned as much to me!"

"How?" exclaimed Magni—"owned he meant to trick thee?"

"Aye, that he did! Ask him!"

Then Magni asked officially whether Edric really wished to trick his uncle.

"Yes, it is true I did assume a garment with intention to deceive, and I am bitterly ashamed. I never told a lie, but that deception seemed so like one that I have felt abased as I never dreamt my father's son would feel."

There was a murmur round the ting, and all the "juries," as we now should call them, regarded Edric with unfeigned surprise.

Then Ulf went on triumphantly, "Said I not truth? Now he will get no land from me on credit, for all his gold-edged tunic! The pauper is not worth a mark of gold, much less two hundred!"

"Wouldst thou, then, sell thy half of the land in question to Edric for that sum?"

"Down on the nail. I would; but not on credit."

"What dost thou say, Edric Sigvaldson? Wilt thou pay Ulf Eirikson two hundred marks to have thy father's land entire?"

"Yes, I will pay it willingly."

"When wilt thou pay two hundred marks? I will not give thee time—no, not a moment, for I will have the money first! Ha, ha! Look at him, yarls and champions! He seems not very willing to put down the cash! Ha, ha! A very shallow trick!"

Said Magni, "Now then, Edric Sigvaldson, when canst thou pay this money?"

"To-morrow, if he wishes it. But is that offer binding? He may ask more to-morrow."

"He cannot. An offer made before the ting is much more binding than any other. He can't go back from it; and if to-morrow thou canst pay the money, or within three days' time, the land is thine. But touching thy attempted trick upon Ulf Eirikson; that has not been explained. I am most grieved to think thy father's son should ever have descended to a trick, for I remember once upon a trial he was asked to tell the truth and fear not. Such anger as he showed I never saw! 'I always tell the truth!' he roared. 'I would not gain eternal happiness by a lie, if it were possible to gain it so; still less would I descend to lie for any earthly good! And as to fear, I marvel any warrior should speak that word together with my name! I am too well known to need defence on such a point as that!'"

"Such was his speech, and all the ting resounded with applause—And thou his son! Oh, Edric Sigvaldson!"

Then Edric related what we know already of the "lying tunic," and as the tale was told the true state of the case began to dawn on Ulf.

"Oh," he exclaimed, "what an unpardonable ass am I! I see it now! But surely, tingsmen, ye must see at once I only made the offer as a joke to show he had not even such a sum to give. Ye know my half of what was Sigvald's land is worth at least a thousand marks*—nay, even more—and now to sell it for two hundred! It was a jest, ye must admit it, tingsmen!"

But Magni would not hear of Ulf's departure from his word. He made him yield possession of the land, and told off certain of the tingsmen to see the business properly concluded. But he strongly disapproved of the intended trick, and said that if he had not been convinced that it was Edric's first attempt at any kind of disingenuousness, he would have given his decision on the other side. But, as it was, the frank acknowledgment and evident repentance he had shown, combined with what was known of Edric to induce him to insist strongly on the offer standing good.

The general opinion went with Magni, though some of the assembled warriors thought Edric should have had a sharper lesson to cure him of any taste for *trickery* that might be lurking in his mind. Ulf was most furious; he still maintained that he had been deceived, and led to form a wrong opinion of his nephew's means, and this had influenced his offer.

Edric asked leave to say a word or two, and this was granted. "I have confessed," he said, "the weakness which had led me to assume a poorer garb than I by right and custom ought to wear. I do repent the silly thought, but it was never carried out. When Ulf beheld me in my poorer dress I had it on to show my mother, and to explain to her my plan. She made me see my error, and I was rushing to the ship to change my clothes when Ulf came up

and met me. I threw the garments overboard. That I was seen in them by Ulf was just an accident. That the assembled tingsmen give the land to me for the two hundred marks is very pleasing, especially when I remember how near I was to losing it. But I am Edric Sigvaldson, and may not taint my father's name with anything like meanness. I therefore beg the tingsmen to allow me to pay the thousand marks to Ulf, and, further, to present him with a spot of land belonging to me at Langa Ness. This will prevent my feeling that I owe my father's land to any kind of trickery, or to an acted lie."

The whole assembly seemed delighted beyond measure with this speech. Ulf seemed less pleased than any, but said nothing. He scowled around upon the tingsmen, and was going to depart, when Magni called to him and said, "Ulf Eirikson, I have watched this cause with more than usual interest, and have formed my own opinion on it. Hear, then, what I think. The old Norwegian law to which thou hast appealed has certainly been rendered good in Iceland—at least, so far as this, that any brother defrauded or deprived unjustly of his share in the paternal lands after the father's death may claim the half of the estate of any brother who may die, reserving to that brother's children the other half of such estate. Now there are two points in this ancient law which seem to me to bar thy claim: first, the person claiming the half of lands from any brother does so after his father's death. Now Eirik Thorwaldson is still alive, and therefore one point in the suit is clearly not in favour of Ulf Eirikson. Secondly, the law supposes that deprivation of the land has happened to the son so disinherited *unjustly*. On this point also, Ulf Eirikson, this law does not apply to thee, for thou art in no way worthy to possess the land which Sigvald Eirikson possessed, or any part of it. Therefore the verdict of the ting, acting upon the law, must be that thou hast not a particle of right to Edric's land, therefore thou hast no power to sell it. That Edric Sigvaldson has promised thee a plot of land we all have heard, and he will keep his promise; but he shall pay no money to thee, for that would savour too much of a purchase. What do the doomsmen think?"

All those present began to applaud most vigorously, swords were beaten against the shields in the old Scandinavian way, until the tingstead was so full of merry music that the glad air rejoiced.

So the decision was that Ulf must yield the land to Edric, and with no further payment than the gift of land at Langa Ness, which, as a free-will offering, was permitted by the ting.

Edric rode away to Reykiavik, together with his mother, intending to remain there until Ulf "cleared out," and then to place his mother in her old dear home at Greendale, while he crossed over to the coast of Norway to see how much his share of profit came to when the imported wares from Wineland were disposed of.

Thorfinn had wished to sail as soon as Edric's trial was concluded, but there

* A Scandinavian mark was equal to £32 English money.

were reasons why he stayed at Reykjavik till Edric's preparations were completed. His house at Krakenness required repairs; Hallfrida wished to see the various portions of the home which fell more closely under her direction in proper order, for though Thorfrida had done her duty by her friend, and seen that many necessary things were cared for, the mistress of a mansion, in all ages, loves to look after things herself, and no one ever can entirely replace her in keeping the household straight.

So there were many reasons why the journey to the capital of Norway, Dronthjem, should be postponed a little space.

Among the followers of Thorfinn the Accomplished there was a warrior who had been distinguished by coolness, skill, and judgment. He was a Christian, as to the outward ceremony of admission to the church by baptism, but much of former thought and teaching still remained behind. He was especially devoted to belief in magic; indeed, this folly tinged the early converts more than has been properly explained. Well-worship lived in England down into the eighteenth century. All of the superstitious customs of the peasantry of England are Scandinavian in their origin, and many of them still survive. Nor is it only among us that this obtains; there are among the Gaelic and the Cymric peasantry some superstitions taught them by their Saxon-English conquerors.

Oleg the Black was very superstitious, and had a firm belief in trolls and valas. So one fine morning he resolved to pay a visit to Geirrida, from whom he heard a very startling prophecy, to the effect that "One who had been nurtured by a bear, would be betrayed and ruined by a wolf." This prophecy was somehow in connection with his (Oleg's) fate, and this had such a powerful

effect upon the champion's mind that he lost all his spirits, and began to mope—as even warriors will at times.

Thorfinn observed the change, and asked his follower what ailed him, and, after some trouble, learnt the cause of this extraordinary turn in Oleg's manner.

He was himself too wise to care about a witch. He had no faith in troldom, nor in the "second sight," to which Iceland dames laid claim as being their particular accomplishment. But he saw in the warning a trace of some conspiracy with which she was connected. So he rode over to her dwelling, as if to ask some questions on his own account.

Thorfinn the Accomplished was as wise as Geirrida was cunning, and a great amount of "fencing" with words and phrases, instead of weapons, ensued between them. She was too wary to expose her knowledge or suspicion, whatever it might be, and gave him vague, unsatisfactory answers. He, on the other hand, was far too "old a soldier" to let her see his actual drift.

They parted, mutually puzzled, Thorfinn more than ever determined to move the "ting" some day to order the departure from the island of every troll, spå-wife, or pretended vala.

Desiring to speak with Magni on this subject, he turned his horse's head in the direction of that noble's dwelling. He found him in the court, conversing with the Lady Ingeborg and their adopted child Asdisa.

Burning with impatience, the haughty champion commenced to speak about his grievance in their presence, and, after the usual salutations, asked the "pontiff-chieftain" whether he would help him in a raid upon the trolls.

"Aye, that I will, especially if thou hast aught against Geirrida, through whom our newly-adopted daughter has

suffered cruelly. I speak not thus from feelings of revenge, but only from my knowledge of what the girl has undergone—in mind, that is, she suffered not in body."

Thorfinn then told his friend the saying of the troll, which had so scared his champion Oleg.

Asdisa hearing this, said to the chieftain's lady: "Dear Lady Ingeborg, I think I know the meaning of the saying of the troll. For seeing I was with her such a dismal while, I have a little of the knack to read her mysterious sayings."

"Say on, my child, the chiefs will hear thee gladly."

Then, as the leaders turned to her to listen, she explained:

"The riddle is not hard to read. The youth who first was nurtured by a bear is Edric Sigvaldson, who went to sea with Byarn (the bear), and is in great danger, from a man named Ulf, who will not leave a stone unturned to wreak his vengeance on his brother's son, to whom he owes a double grudge since the decision of the ting."

Thorfinn burst into a good-humoured laugh. "Thou art a troll—almost—thyself, Asdisa, and if friend Magni should begin to hunt the witches, by my sword, he should begin with thee! Thanks all the same for reading us the riddle, which seems so easy now we know it. I was an ass to miss the hidden meaning of the names, which lies not very deep, seeing that Ulf is known to all of us. Accept this golden bracelet, and many thanks for the warning. No, Magni, thou art very kind, but I have work on board, and must away. I cannot stop and taste thy cheer."

"Well, as thou wilt, friend Thorfinn. I would I might go with thee to the court of Norway, but as it is, adieu!"

(To be continued.)

GREAT SHIPWRECKS OF THE WORLD.

THE WRECK OF THE DUNBAR.

IN our June part for 1884 we described the wreck of the Dunbar at Sydney in 1857, and in the November part for the same year we described the wreck of the Cavarra at Newcastle, in which the sole survivor of the Dunbar was again saved from a watery grave. In these accounts great interest seems to have been taken in the colonies. We herewith give, from the "Sydney Morning Herald" of August 22nd last, the report of a speech in which that fortunate, or unfortunate, man describes his rescue from the famous wreck. We may add that the Gap is at the South Head, not the North Head, as stated, in error, in our article:—

"Saturday last being the thirtieth anniversary of the wreck of the ship Dunbar on the rocks near South Head, occasion was taken to commemorate the terrible disaster by a dinner at Ferguson's Signal Hotel, Watson's Bay. About sixty gentlemen sat down to an excellent repast, Mr. D. O'Connor, M.L.A., presiding. Upon his right was Mr. James Johnson, of Nobbys, Newcastle, the sole survivor of the ill-fated vessel; and facing him was his rescuer, Mr. George James, clerk of works, Woollahra, who, by a strange coincidence, had not seen Mr. Johnson since the day he hauled him by a rope to the top of the cliffs. Their greeting was most cordial. The customary loyal toasts having been honoured, the health of 'The Sole Survivor, James Johnson,' was proposed

by the chairman, and was drunk with enthusiasm. Mr. Johnson, who showed considerable emotion when referring to the tragic morning of his rescue, briefly described the circumstances of the wreck, and drew to recollection the terrible sight which had been witnessed of hundreds of male and female corpses floating about, mangled and mutilated by sharks and beaten into unrecognisable masses against the rocks. He was, he said impressively, 'the only, only one left, and no words of his could convey more than that.' They left England in good spirits, and after a fine passage passed up to the Heads with 121 souls on board. On reaching Botany every one was making preparations to disembark, and their luggage was being made up. A great many persons were under the impression that the ship went ashore at the Gap. That was a mistake; she struck a good way to the southward of it. It was also an error to say that Captain Green mistook the Gap for Sydney Heads. The captain thought he was too far along the coast northward to make the Heads, and all hands were suddenly called upon to 'wear ship,' and the passengers imagined that they were rounding into the harbour. Two men and the second mate were sent out to the forecable to keep a good lookout, as none could see, except at times, through heavy rain squalls, where they were. The first cry was 'breakers ahead,' which went like a flash of lightning through the emigrants. Immediately afterwards the captain roared out at the top of his voice to the man at the wheel, 'Port your helm; haul round the port and fore mabrace!' It was then found that the vessel was too far south instead of north, and just as they got her head round she was close in, broadside along the cliffs, which towered above her; in fact, her yards almost

touched them. Everything aboard was at once struck by an immense sea, and the ship capsized broadside outwards towards the ocean, and not out to the rocks, as many had said. Finding that she was fast commencing to break up, and that every one had to fight for life, he clambered from the mizen chains to the main chains, and then on to the fore chains. The boatswain, who was at hand, called out amid the howling of the wind, 'It's all over with us, Jim; good-bye, old fellow.' He replied as loudly as he could, 'While there's life there's hope. Watch your chance for a spring, and do your best.' A tremendous sea then washed him (Mr. Johnson) away, and a moment later he found himself thrown with tremendous violence high up the cliffs into a sort of large crevice or cave, into and from which the water rushed and retreated incessantly. He remained there in constant danger of being washed out until daylight, wet through, and almost dead from cold; but eventually, after he had continued to signal at intervals with his hat, a rope was lowered by some one, and in a half-sensible condition he fastened himself to it, and was a rescued man. Before that time the flood tide had compelled him to seek refuge on a higher level. Mr. George James, who had lowered the rope in question, mentioned that, upon hearing of the wreck, he, as a young man, ran almost all the way from Paddington to South Head. On arrival there he heard a coloured man, one of a crowd who were gazing over the cliffs, call out, 'There seems to be a man alive down there; something is moving.' He looked over, and far down, upon a ledge, he saw what he took to be a handkerchief being fluttered at intervals. Dead bodies, mangled in every shape and form, were being dashed about in all directions, and the scene was of such a

terrific nature that it could never pass from his memory. He, with others, secured a rope and lowered it down, but the force of the gale blew its end seawards. It was then hoisted up, and a 'sougee' bag partly filled with stones was attached, and it dragged it to where the signals were coming from. Johnson undid the bag, fastened himself with a

noose and gave the signal to 'haul away.' This was obeyed cautiously and slowly, and when half-way up his 'sou'-wester' fell off. He did not dare to look below, but beckoned with one hand for them to continue hauling; and eventually he, the only survivor, was dragged safely over the topmost ledge, more dead than alive. Strange to say, from that day until

Saturday they had not again met each other. The toast of 'The Departed Dead' was drunk in silence, and, after several other toasts had been given, the visitors were shown by Mr. Johnson the exact spot at which the wreck occurred. This is about ninety or a hundred yards northwards from the present new electric-light lighthouse on South Head."

THE WILD EAST.

BY THE REV. C. MERK, OF UPPINGHAM,

Author of "An Ancient Battlefield of Heroes," etc.

WE hear a good deal of travelling in the wild west; we hear of postchaises and even railway trains passing through herds of buffaloes, through swarms of Indians, through burning prairies. We read of great perils and hair's breadth escapes. But we do not seem to know, that in our own British territories, in the far east, in India, we may every day meet with similar adventures, though perhaps of not quite so exciting a character.

Take for instance the line which travels north to south along the course of the Indus. That river, springing from the high mountains of Tibet, flows through the whole length of the two provinces, Punjab and Sindh. It divides the latter into two almost equal halves.

The River Indus has not only given to the province of Sindh, but also to the great country of India, or Hindustan, its name. It is for the western portion of that country, what the Nile is to Egypt. The whole length of its valley is like a "garden of God," green with rice and sugar-cane, overshadowed by magnificent mango, palm, banyan trees, alive with the call of the turtle-dove and the pigeon, and resounding with the lowing of cattle, with the laugh and talk of human voices. But this green and fertile strip becomes narrower and narrower, as the river descends on its southward course; the valley is only about six miles broad south of Multan, and to the east and west there extends the sandy plain. To the east there lies the great Rajputana desert, which may be in some parts compared to the Sahara. It consists of vast plateaux of sand, or layers of rock, which are rarely only interspersed with oases. And a long march from thirty to forty miles brings the wearied and thirsty traveller from one well of brackish water to the other. The few human habitations, which consist of reed grass matting, miserably put together, and partly covered with mud, shelter a tribe of shy, wild, dark-looking natives, evidently of aboriginal descent, whose language no one understands, and who seem to have some affinity with our gipsies. These habitations cling to the scanty wells, and the small patches of green which surround the mouth of the well. The wide plains of sand all around are impassable except to caravans.

They are swept occasionally by fierce sandstorms, they are enlivened only by mirages which appear on the line of the horizon. The heat at daytime during one season, the biting cold at night during the other, are almost unendurable. But even this lonely desert is not altogether uninhabited. Threading your path through it, you may come upon a stray wild pig, you may see a troop of gazelles scampering off, or you desecrate a bustard winging its way into the grey distance. The largest oasis in the desert, Bikaneer, the head of a Rajput, a Hindoo principality, produces a breed of camels which are far famed for strength, swiftness and endurance. A good Bikaneer riding camel will fetch £20 in the market, more than twice as much as an ordinary animal. The old

Thakurs, chiefs of Bikaneer, are feudal subjects of the Viceroy of India, very much as Norman barons were of the King of England, or German knights of the Emperor. In former times these Thakurs exercised their rights and privileges just like any mediæval knight might have done. They held their serfs in bondage. They enlisted their services. Clad in mail armour, mounted on camels, and followed by a well-equipped retinue, these Hindoo knights scoured the country far and wide. They swooped down on the merchants who carried on the trade between the Indus and Central Provinces. They took the merchandise; they seized the merchants; they levied blackmail all round. And it is interesting to hear grey-bearded men repeat the narratives their fathers told them, of the wild days of yore, which sound like mediæval romances, sung in our days.

The Indus Valley railway travels north to south at a few miles' distance to the east of the river; it forms almost the line along which the rich and green vegetation of the valley gradually passes into the desert. The grey, flat country is covered with sand, on which only short scrubby tamarisk-bushes and the high tiger-grass can thrive. The ground is impregnated with saltpetre. It is sometimes covered with a crust thick and white like ice; under a bright moon you might think you were crossing a snow-field, and when the wind carries clouds of sand before it, you can taste the salt on your lips, as it were the froth of the sea, blown by the storm in flakes across the land. The portion of the line to which I am now referring, lies between Multan in the Punjab, and Sukkur in Sindh. It takes a night and a day, over twenty hours by passenger train, to get from one place to the other. On this long stretch there are only three European stations, separated the one from the other by a hundred miles of sand: each station consists of about a dozen square, flat, white-washed bungalows, standing in a row along the line. As you see them, surrounded by the interminable grey sand and by the stunted miserable-looking brushwood, beat upon by the fierce light and glare of the sun, you could not imagine a more desolate and dreary scene. The railway employés, the drivers, stokers, firemen, and signallers, who inhabit these stations, come out under a five years' engagement with Government. They draw a salary of £80 or £100; some who have got on in the service, and who are entrusted with passenger trains, get as much as £200 and £250; and by working overtime, that is over and above what they are obliged to do by contract, they can increase their income by another £50 or £100. This seems a very fair income: it is so for a bachelor—most of the men are young and unmarried; but there are also men, advanced in life, who have families, and who have regularly settled down to railway work in the Indus valley. Their life has many discomforts; and it presents generally a curious contrast of luxury and want. At every station, for instance, there are stores where you can get all kinds of

tinned provisions, salmon, lobster, beef-tea, jellies, marmalades, ginger, and where you see quite an array of Australian and European clarets. But on the other hand, you cannot obtain, for love or money, pure milk or wholesome bread. You step into a bungalow, and you see a couple of men, sitting in their shirt-sleeves, on rough chairs at an ordinary deal table (which cannot boast of a table-cloth). Their meal seems most dainty—it is roast chicken with the condiment of apple or red currant jelly; but instead of bread they must be satisfied with the rough *chapatti*, the native unleavened cake, of the coarsest meal, which has been baked on a hot stone; and they wash down every morsel with draughts of brackish water. They can afford to dress well, to carry a gun and rifle, or even to sport a pony carriage; but they must do with the scantiest and roughest of furniture. Two chairs—one broken, the other rickety—one native bedstead, a table and a tub, are all the possessions of a bachelor; a married man buys a couple of chairs more in the bazaar at Sukkur, and perhaps a piano. Each house has half a dozen servants; but there is no master who would not gladly exchange the lot of them for one English "buttons," or "boots," or housemaid. There is the *dhobie*, washerman, who beats your flannel shirts against a rough stone to clean them, and hangs them on the thorniest bush to dry, who exchanges your new linen for old vestments of his own, and carefully wrenches off all the buttons of your cuffs.

There is the bearer and cook, under whose skilful hands your stores of tea, sugar, and coffee melt away like snow in the March sun, who invariably replies, when you ask him to make you a cup of tea, "*khatm ho gaya*," it has come to an end. There is the *syce*, the groom, under whose fostering care your pony waxes daily beautifully thinner. You ask him, with grim sarcasm, whether he intends using the animal's haunches for a peg to hang up his pugree and shoes; but the native answers with a profound bow, that it is intended for your lordship to ride! And when you leave him the stern alternative either to bring the animal into condition within a fortnight, or else to quit your service, then the poor brute begins to swell visibly before your eyes (being fed on green grass), to use Sam Weller's description of a certain person at a tea-party. And if you order him to feed your pony twice a day under your window, then Master Ram Chand will show you, with a mien of respectful deference, the proper quantity of gram, and then by sleight of hand slip a considerable portion of the horse's food into the folds of his ample white garments. There is Muhammad Khan, the cook, the head servant, the chief rascal. He puts his *dasturi* (commission) of ten per cent. on all victuals which he buys in the bazaars; he gives small allowances to the other servants, on the principle on which the lion leaves a bone to the jackals. The system works well as long as all the servants, like friendly spirits, act in harmony and concord.

But if the Muhammadan cook "splits" on the Hindoo groom or the Sikh watchman, then there ensue scenes which are revelations of the iniquity of human nature, and in which you who have been the chief sufferer, can take only a mournful interest.

Such are the trials and woes of Europeans in all rural out-of-the-way stations. But railway-men feel these troubles more keenly; their pay is much smaller than

most Government employes in India; the waste, caused by the laziness or peculation of servants, forms invariably the heaviest item of their household bill; the little surplus which they draw over men of their class in England soon melts away under this system. The great extremes of heat and cold, the want of pure milk and water, render some stations of the Indus valley most unhealthy. Epidemics of cholera,

typhoid and dysentery are not unfrequent; I have known hot weather months, when everybody was down with fever, when the men could hardly stand on their engines; and many a strong, stout-hearted fellow, many a young child, lies in one of the small cemeteries of the Indus valley buried in the desert sands.

(To be continued.)

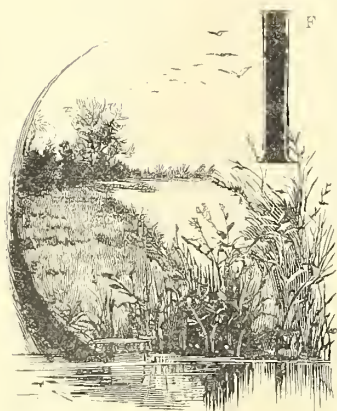
THE MASTER OF THE SHELL:

A PUBLIC SCHOOL STORY.

BY TALBOT BAINES REED,

Author of "A Dog with a Bad Name," "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VIII.—WHEN THE CAT'S AWAY THE MICE WILL PLAY.



RAILSFORD had entertained any lurking hope that his private affairs were sacred in the hands of his prospective kinsman, the little incident recorded at the close of the last chapter did away with the last remnant of any such delusion.

He did not say anything about it. He was punctilious to a degree in anything which affected his honour; and as what he had overheard on the occasion in question had been part of a private conversation not intended for his ears, he felt himself unable to take any notice of it. Still, it was impossible for him to regard the faithless Arthur with quite as brotherly an eye as before; and the manner in which that young gentleman avoided him for the next few days, and hung out signals of distress in his presence, showed pretty plainly that these silent reproaches were not being thrown away.

Of course Arthur did every imaginable thing to make matters worse in the house, by way of proving his contrition. He besought Wake not to let the story go about, greatly to the amusement of that young humourist, who had already heard it from half a dozen sources since the beginning of the term. He threatened Dimsdale with all sorts of penalties if he spread the secret any further. Dimsdale, who had long ago informed every one of his acquaintance, cheerfully promised it should go no further. So anxious was Arthur to make up for his offence, that when one or two fellows spoke to him about it, and asked him if

it was true that Railsford and his sister were going to be married, he prevaricated and hedged till he got hopelessly out of his depth.

"Married!" he would reply, scornfully, "fiddlesticks! I tell you there's nothing in it—all jaw! Who told you they were going to be married?"

From utterances like these an impression got abroad in some quarters that Railsford wanted to marry "Chuckey," but "Chuckey" wouldn't have him. So the last end of the story was worse than the first.

Railsford, however, did not hear this latest version of his own romance; and, indeed, had plenty of other things just at this time to occupy his attention.

Much to his own satisfaction, he received a polite note from Smedley, the captain of the school, to inform him that he had been elected a vice-president of the Athletic Union, and expressing a hope that he would favour the treasurer with the annual subscription now due, and attend a committee on Saturday evening in Mr. Roe's house to arrange about the spring sports.

Both requests he gladly complied with. Previous to the meeting he had been present as umpire at a football-match in the meadows between the first twelve against the next twenty. It was a finely-contested battle, and his opinion of Grandcourt rose as he stood and looked on. The play of the twelve was as near perfection as anything he had seen at Cambridge. Smedley, the school captain, at half-back, quick, impetuous, commanding, handled his men like a machine. Barnworth at quarter-back, and Ainger forward, did honour to their house and the school; the giant Branscombe, captain of Bickers's house, and Clipstone, his inseparable ally, passed the ball and backed one another up with a smartness and finish that was almost bewildering; nor were the other "caps" a whit behind them. Despite the gallant defence of the twenty—in which our Fifth form friends of a certain memorable breakfast-party were conspicuous for their dogged valour—the seniors carried the ball into their lines and over their goal time after time, so that when "no side" was called they stood victors by five goals to none, and deserved every cheer they received from the assembled spectators, includ-

ing, when all was over, the umpire, whose labours had been almost a sinecure, but who had felt the boy within him revive as if by magic while he stood by and watched.

He amused Grover and Mr. Roe in the masters' hall by his enthusiasm concerning the afternoon's performance, and looked forward impatiently to the meeting in the evening, when he would find himself at the congenial work—how much more congenial than the daily droning in the Shell!—of encouraging the finest fellows in the school to a series of athletic achievements.

It had not occurred to him till he was about to start that his two principal prefects would of course be members of the committee in whose deliberations he was to take part. But he considered he might safely leave the control of the house during his short absence to the keeping of Stafford and Felgate, who, though neither of them the kind of boy to inspire much confidence, had at least the title to be considered equal to the task. After all, it was only for an hour. Possibly no one would know of his absence, and on this the first occasion of his being present at a meeting in whose objects he had so much interest, he felt that his duty to the school had as much claim on him as his duty to his house.

So he ran the risk, and went quietly out at the appointed time, in the comfortable assurance that his house was absorbed in preparation, and would never miss him.

The meeting came up to his expectations. He was the only master present, and as such was voted to the chair. He made a little speech he had got ready in case of need, lauding up athletics to the skies, and confessing his own sympathy and enthusiasm for whatever tended towards the physical improvement of Grandcourt. The boys cheered him at every sentence, and when Smedley afterwards welcomed him in the name of the boys, and said they were all proud to have an old "blue" among their masters, he received quite a small ovation.

Then the meeting went heartily to work over the business of the sports. The prize list was examined, and pronounced to be not quite up to the mark of the last year or two. Whereupon the new master, amid renewed cheers, pro-

mised to give the cup for the high jump.

After that came the delicate question of ways and means. Could they afford a band? Should they charge a shilling or sixpence to strangers at the gates? Should the entrance-fees for the juniors be the same as for the seniors? And so on. The chairman's opinion was expected on each point, and gladly given; and when, later on, he announced that he believed he knew a friend who, in the event of a loss, would contribute up to two pounds to make it good, he was the hero of the hour. How he enjoyed that meeting! How delicious it was to be looked up to, to be accounted somebody, to be cheered, to be consulted! His thoughts now and then turned with

a shudder to the daily drudgery in the Shell, and the uphill fight with anarchy in his house. If only he could devote himself to the school athletics, how much good he might do to Grandcourt, and how happy would be his own lot!

Alas! all good things fly past with cruel speed. After an hour and a half's steady work the programme was arranged, the date was fixed, the expenses were estimated, and the vote of thanks was given to the chairman.

"Would you mind umpiring again next Saturday, sir?" asked Smedley, as they parted.

"With all the pleasure in the world—any time," said the master, only wishing he could play in the fifteen himself.

Some of the head boys laughed a little when he had gone.

"He's pretty gushing about it now," said Branscombe; "I hope he'll keep it up."

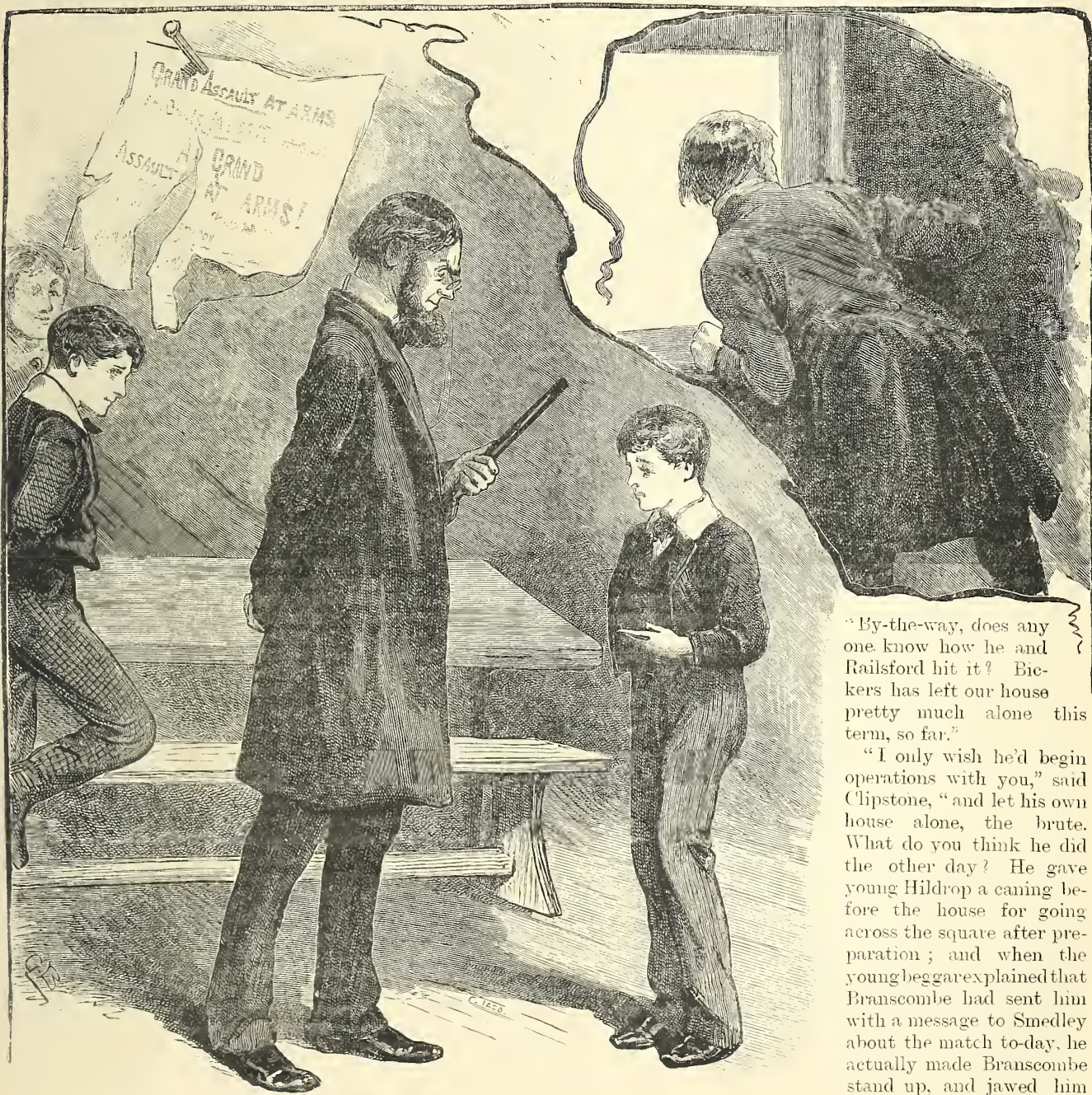
"Yes. Moss began much the same way, and then left us brutally in the lurch," responded Ainger.

"He'll last over the sports, I fancy," said Smedley. "By-the-way, Branscombe, is there any use asking Bickers to do anything for us?"

"Bickers!" exclaimed Branscombe, flushing up angrily—"Bickers be hanged!"

"Certainly; by all means," said the captain: "only that won't exactly help on the sports."

"I'm not so sure of that," said Ainger.



Mr. Bickers in Railsford's House.

"By-the-way, does any one know how he and Railsford hit it? Bickers has left our house pretty much alone this term, so far."

"I only wish he'd begin operations with you," said Clipstone, "and let his own house alone, the brute. What do you think he did the other day? He gave young Hildrop a caning before the house for going across the square after preparation; and when the young beggar explained that Branscombe had sent him with a message to Smedley about the match to-day, he actually made Branscombe stand up, and jawed him before the whole house, and

promised next time he'd lick him too. Fancy that!"

A shudder of horror went round the prefects present, and Branscombe's black looks fully confirmed his friend's story.

"There's one blessing," growled he, as he took his chum's arm and walked off, "it can't go on much longer."

Whereupon the boys scattered and strolled back to their respective houses.

Railsford's house, meanwhile, had celebrated the temporary absence of its ruler in strictly orthodox fashion.

Scarcely had he departed, flattering himself that the deluded mice were still under the spell of the cat's presence in their neighbourhood, when the word went round like wildfire, "Coast's clear!"

Arthur and the baronet heard it in their study, and flung their books to the four winds and rushed howling down to the common room. The "Babies" heard it, and kicked over their forms, and executed war-dances in the passages. The Fifth form "muggers" heard it, and barricaded their doors and put cotton-wool in their ears. Stafford and Felgate heard it, and shrugged their shoulders and wondered when the other prefects would be back.

"Aren't you coming to the common room, you two?" demanded Tilbury of Arthur and Dig, slipping a paper into their hands; "come along, sharp, I say."

They looked at the document curiously, and read as follows:

GRAND ASSAULT-AT-ARMS!

For the benefit of H. TILBURY, Esq.

A GRAND

ASSAULT-AT-ARMS

Will be held in the Common Room immediately.

BOXING! WRESTLING!! SINGLESTICK!!!

HANDSOME PRIZES!!!!

Admission, 1d. Entrance Fee, 3d. each event.

All are welcome! Come early to get a seat!

By order.

There was no resisting this stirring call to arms, and in five minutes the common room was packed to suffocation.

H. Tilbury, Esq., was in grand form. Standing upon a chair, he yelled, "Come on, you beggars; who's going in for the boxing? 3d. apiece."

Arthur, Digby, and half a dozen other "Shellfish" rose to their feet, and struggled forward to the arena.

"All serene," cried the delighted benefit-man. "Shell out your three-pennies. Walk up, walk up! List closes in two seconds."

"I'll owe it you," said Arthur.

"No you don't," said Tilbury, beginning to see a possible flaw in his arrangements.

"Shut up, or you'll be turned out," cried Dig, upsetting the chair on which the hero stood.

"Now then, you chaps," cried Arthur, quite heedless of the expostulations and protests of the late manager, "look alive. We've only got five pairs of gloves. Let's all wire in together

and have a knock-out, and the man who floors all the others wins."

This proposal was approved by all except the outraged Tilbury. He, however, was speedily disposed of.

"Look here, Tilbury, do you want to go in or not? If not, hook it; you're a regular nuisance."

"I tell you it's *my* assault-at-arms," expostulated Tilbury.

"Your fiddlesticks! You go and play by yourself out in the passage, and don't spoil our fun here. Shan't ask you to breakfast again. Now, you fellows, are you ready? No hitting below the belt. One, two, three, and away!"

Thereupon ensued a gladiatorial contest of a very high order, the vicissitudes of which it is hardly necessary here to describe, beyond relating that after most of the combatants had remained locked for some time in a deadly embrace on the dusty floor, the baronet struggled to his feet and announced that he had "pulled it off." Whereat the audience cheered him vociferously.

Arthur, however, very red in the face, raising his head from the general *mêlée*, disputed the assertion in very forcible terms, and called upon the company to help him out, so as to make good his claims. The company acceded, and, greatly to Tilbury's disgust, a very fine display of boxing ensued between the two cronies, vehemently applauded by the spectators, amongst whom were the prefects and one or two of the sporting Fifth, but towards the enjoyment of which nobody contributed anything in the way either of gate money or entrance fees "for the benefit of H. Tilbury, Esq."

After about twenty very spirited rounds, the spectators voted that the boxing had gone on long enough, and called out for the next event on the programme.

Here was Tilbury's chance. Mounting his chair once more, he shouted out, "Who's going in for the wrestling? Only 3d. apiece, entrance, and—alright, Oakshott, I'll tell Railsford of you."

This last irrelevant remark was occasioned by a second upsetting of his rostrum by the irreverent baronet, with a friendly exhortation not to talk till he was spoken to; and the mighty threat with which the enterprising "manager" of the evening's sport went under, added special mirth to the enjoyment of the good-humoured audience.

"I vote," cried Arthur, seizing the vacated chair, "I vote Felgate and Stafford have a set-to. What do you say? Two to one on Felgate!"

The proposal met with acclamation, and a general movement was made to the door, where the prefects stood rather guiltily looking on, with a view to coax them into the arena.

"No, no," said Felgate, "nothing of the sort. We came to stop this row."

"Oh, but you looked on at the boxing. Do have a go in at wrestling. We'll none of us tell," urged the baronet.

"Some other time," said Felgate, sheering off; "I've got some work to do. I say, don't make too much row, or there'll be some trouble."

"There's nobody about. Come on. We can kick up as much row as we like," shouted the high-principled Ar-

thur. "Who cares for my spooney old brother-in-law, Marky?"

The shout of laughter which followed this noble appeal suddenly dropped into a deadly silence as the lank form of Mr. Bickers appeared in the doorway.

Arthur rapidly lost himself in the crowd. The two prefects, with flushed faces, elbowed their way into the room as though just arrived to quell the uproar. A few boys snatched up books and flopped down at their desks. Tilbury darted frantically here and there, to call in copies of the compromising programme, and one or two of the most lucky boys slunk out at the door, and so saved themselves.

But Mr. Bickers had too keen an eye to let himself be imposed upon. He had witnessed the scene from a window in his own house, and, surmising by the noise that no authority was present to deal with the disorder, had taken upon himself to look in in a friendly way and set things right.

"Silence!" he cried, closing the door behind him, and walking two steps into the room. "Where is Mr. Railsford?"

"Out, sir," said Stafford.

"And the prefects?"

"Felgate and I are prefects, sir. The other two are out."

"And you two have allowed this noise and disorder to go on for half an hour?"

"We were going to stop it," said Felgate, faltering.

"By looking on and applauding?" responded the master. "You forget that from one of my windows everything that goes on here is plainly visible, including those who stand at the door and look on when they ought to know better. Go to your rooms, you two."

"We are in charge of the house, sir," mildly protested Felgate.

"I am in charge of the house," thundered Mr. Bickers. "Obey me, and go."

They withdrew, chafing, crest-fallen, and very uncomfortable.

"Now," said Mr. Bickers, when the door was again closed, "Arthur Herapath, come here."

Mr. Bickers's knowledge of the names of the boys in other houses was quite phenomenal. Arthur, with hanging head and thumping heart, slunk forward.

"So, sir," said Mr. Bickers, fixing him with his eye, "you are the model boy whom I heard proclaiming as I came in that you could make as much noise as you liked, and called your absent master by an insulting name."

"Please sir," pleaded the unlucky Arthur, "I didn't mean it to be insulting. I only called him Marky, because he's my brother-in-law—I mean he's going to be."

"That's right, Mr. Bickers," said the baronet, nobly backing up his friend, "he's spoo—I mean he's engaged to Daisy, Herapath's sister."

"Silence, sir," said the master with a curl of his lips. "Herapath, come here, and hold out your hand."

So saying, he took up a ruler from a desk close at hand.

"Please, sir," expostulated Arthur—he didn't mind a cane, but had a rooted objection to rulers, "I really didn't—"

"Hold out your hand, sir!"

There was no denying Mr. Bickers. Arthur held out his hand, and was there and then, before half his house, admonished six times consecutively, with an emphasis which brought the tears fairly into his hardened eyes.

"Now go, all of you, to your studies, and continue your preparation. I shall remain in the house till Mr. Railsford returns, and report what has occurred to him."

When half an hour later the Master of the Shell, full of his athletic prospects, returned to his quarters, he was gratified as well as surprised by the dead silence which reigned. His astonishment was by no means diminished when on entering the common room he encountered Mr. Bickers pacing up and down the floor amidst the scared juniors there assembled.

Railsford, with all his follies, was a man of quick perception, and took in the whole situation at a glance. He understood why Mr. Bickers was there, and why the place was so silent. Still more, he perceived that his own authority in the house had suffered a shock, and that a lesson was being read him by the man whom, of all his colleagues, he disliked the most.

"Good evening," said Mr. Bickers, with a show of friendliness.

Mark nodded.

"I am glad to be able to render up your house to you in rather better order than I found it. If you'll take my advice, Railsford, you will not venture out, in the evening specially, leaving no one in authority. It is sure to be taken advantage of."

Railsford bit his lips.

"I ought to be much obliged to you," said he, coldly. "As it happens, I did not venture out without leaving any one in authority."

"If you mean Stafford and—what is his name?—Felgate—I can't congratulate you on your deputies. They were, in fact, aiding and abetting the disorder, and I have sent them to their rooms as incompetent. I would advise you to relieve them of their office as soon as you can."

"Thank you for your advice," said Railsford, whose blood was getting up. "I will make my own arrangements in my own house."

"Of course, my dear fellow," replied Bickers, blandly, "but you should really find two better men than those. There was no attempt to stop the disorder

(which had been going on for half an hour) when I arrived. I had to castigate one of the ringleaders myself—Herapath, by name, claiming kinship with you, by-the-way. I'm not sure that you ought not to report him to Dr. Ponsford."

It was all Railsford could do to listen quietly to this speech, drawled out slowly and cuttingly by his rival. He made a desperate effort to control himself, as he replied,

"Don't you think, Mr. Bickers, you might with advantage go and see how your own house is getting on in your absence?"

Mr. Bickers smiled.

"Happily, I have responsible prefects. However, now you are back—and if you are not going out again—I will say good night."

Railsford said "Good night," and disregarding the proffered hand of his colleague, walked moodily up to his own room.

He may be excused if he was put out and miserable. He was in the wrong, and he knew it. And yet the manner in which the rebuke had been administered was such as no man of spirit could cheerfully endure.

The one idea in his mind was, not how to punish the house for its disorder, but how to settle scores with Bickers for restoring order; not how to admonish the incompetent prefects, but how to justify them against their accuser.

He sent for the four prefects to his room before bed hour.

Ainger and Barnworth, it was plain to see, had been informed of all that had happened, and were in a more warlike mood even than their two companions.

"I hear," said Railsford, "that there was a disturbance in the house while I was away for a short time this evening. Ainger and Barnworth of course were out too, but I should like to hear from you, Stafford and Felgate, what it was all about."

Stafford allowed Felgate to give his version, which was, like most of Felgate's versions, decidedly apocryphal.

"There was rather a row, sir," said he, "among some of the juniors. Some of them were wrestling, I fancy. As soon as we saw what was going on, Stafford and I came to stop it, when Mr. Bickers turned up and sent us to our rooms. We told him we had been left in charge by you, but he would not listen."

"Very annoying!" said the master.

"It's rather humiliating to our house, sir," said Ainger, "if our prefects are not to be allowed to deal with our own fellows."

"I agree with you," said Mark, warmly. "I have no reason whatever for doubting that they can and will do their duty when—"

He had intended to say "when they are not interfered with," but deemed it more prudent to say "when occasion requires."

"We could easily have stopped the row, sir," said Stafford, "if we had been allowed to do so."

"I have no doubt of it," said the master. "I am glad to have had this little explanation. The honour of our house is of common interest to all of us."

A week ago this speech would have seemed a mere commonplace exhortation, but under present circumstances it had a double meaning for those present.

"He's a brick," said Ainger, as they returned to their studies. "He means to back us up, after all, and pay Bickers out."

"What surprises me," said Barnworth, "is that Stafford, the bulldog, did not invite the intruder out into the square, and impress the honour of our house with two black marks on each of his eyes."

"I'm just as glad," said Felgate, "it's all happened. We shouldn't have got Railsford with us if—"

"If you'd done your duty, and stopped the row the moment it began," said Ainger, who, with all his jealousy for his house, had no toleration for humbug, even in a prefect whose cause he espoused.

So Railsford's house went to bed that night in a warlike mood.

Arthur appeared next day with his hand in an imposing-looking bandage, and reaped the fruits of his martyrdom in an intoxicating outburst of popularity.

The house Fifteen cancelled their approaching match with Bickers's house in hostile terms. The "Babies" took to cheering their master in the square whenever Mr. Bickers was at hand to hear them. And, most significant symptom of all, the blind of the common room in Railsford's was mended, and pulled down regularly every evening as soon as the gas was lit.

(To be continued.)

THE SIGHTS OF OUR GREAT CITIES.

LONDON MUSEUMS.—I.

THE most interesting museum in London is passed unheeded by thousands of sightseers. A few yards up Exhibition Road, opposite the Science Schools, and between South Kensington Post Office and the late entrance to the International Exhibitions—Fisheries, Healtheries, and what not—there is a shabby wooden shelter. Over it, on a brown board, is written, "South Kensington Museum Science Collections and Modern Art Manufactures," or something of the sort,

for the last line is constantly changing. Entering the glass door, and noticing that the museum is open free on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays, from ten "till four, five, or six, according to the season," which practically means four, we advance down a noisy, dirty corridor, with a few awful examples of the depths to which British art can sink in the statue way. At the end of the corridor is a turnstile and a blank wall. Anything more hopeless than this approach it would be difficult to ima-

gine. In ordinary persons "museum headache" has begun before the turnstile is reached. However, dear reader, take our advice, and go to this museum; hurry down the corridor, pass the turnstile, and persevere. There is nothing to be bashful about; if you go in the morning you will probably have the place to yourself!

Turn to the right for a moment after passing the turnstile, and, temporarily stowed away, you will see a capital model of Chatham Dockyard, and a few bridge

models, perhaps. This you would have missed had you not taken it at the start, for we are going straight through. Our museum is half a mile long!

Entering the main doors we find ourselves in a great showroom of electro-plate, gold, silver, copper, cups and flagons, and shields and armour—all very beautiful, but not over interesting. Persevere! At the end of this grand display of gold-plate is a flight of stairs to the left, and a doorway to the right. Let us go upstairs first. We are amongst toybooks and schoolbooks, and school furniture of all sorts, a very miscellaneous collection, and serving as a damper on most youthful minds. Be not discouraged, but proceed!

At once we are in the midst of one of the finest collections of ship models in the world. At Greenwich we saw the models of the men-of-war built in the Government yards. Here are the models of those built in private yards, and much else besides. The first model we reach is that of the *Ormuz*, the new Orient Liner, launched a few months ago, and now holding the record for the best steam passage to Australia; and there are representative boats of all our chief lines. Here is the *City of Rome*, of the Anchor Line; the *Roslin Castle*, of Currie's Line; the *Kaikoura*, of the New Zealand Line; the *Servia*, of the Cunard Line; and many more. Here is that strange contrivance the Russian Emperor's eleven thousand ton yacht, *Livadia*, and farther on is the *Popoffka*; and there are all sorts of other queer craft. Chief among the war-ships is the huge model of the Northumberland, a ship of the same class as the *Minotaur* and *Agincourt*, and now the flagship of the Channel Fleet. All round are vessels in different stages of construction: models showing the requirements for classing at Lloyd's; new and old rigs and sail plans. Making our way westward we come to another long room devoted to smaller craft—fishing boats, river launches, yachts, including a capital model of the *America*, and a highly finished miniature of the beautiful *Formosa*. In the case close by is a real racing model, of the Victoria Park school of architecture. These ship models alone are worth going to see, but there is much more. At the end of the Model Gallery across the landing is a collection of lathes and tools of interest to many; and when these have been looked at, it is best to return through the shipping to the goldsmith's work, and then take the tempting doorway to the right, which we disregarded at first.

Here is now arranged the Patent Museum, an unrivalled collection of objects familiar by name to all boy readers. Here is the original engine of the first steamboat, that of Miller of Dalswinton and Symington. Here is the identical engine of the *Comet*, the first steamboat on the Clyde. Here is Watt's engine, with the sun and planet motion, which he had to invent because some one stole his invention of the crank, one of the workmen having drawn a sketch of it in chalk on a taproom table in the presence of a dishonest stranger. Here are the "Rocket," the "Sanspareil," "Puffing Billy," and the "Agenoria." Here are Bramah's original hydraulic press, Bell's original reaping machine, and Arkwright's original spinning-jenny. Here are Trevithick's engine, and the old pumping-engine. Here are James Watt's original models, and, amid much machinery of all kinds and in all stages, the early instruments used in telegraphy. Among the models is a wonderfully complete one of an engineer's shop, another there is of steel manufacture by the old process, and another of the Bessemer process. In this collection alone you could spend a day. Everything can be seen at its best; very different is the ar-

rangement now from what it used to be in the crowded old iron shed near the Art Museum.

But we must go on through more passages stocked with building materials into Frank Buckland's Fish Museum, where trout are being hatched amid a somewhat dingy set of fishing-boats and apparatus. At last, after passing a huge water-colour drawing of Deep Sea Life, we enter the Science Museum. Take the ground-floor first. We are among the calculating machines, Babbage's and others, linkwork models, measuring machinery, clocks—one of them the Glastonbury clock, any number of years old. Back we come down the other side, and, mounting the stairs, we are in a range of galleries devoted in turn to the rest of the sciences in the South Kensington course. Here is a huge electrical machine, with plates about seven feet across, and then every electrical instrument known follows on. Here is a physiological museum, a botanical museum, a geological museum, an optical museum. Here is the Palestine Exploration Fund Collection. Here are the volcano machines we have heard of, and the earthquake measurers, and the Ordnance Survey Exhibition. And at last we descend the far staircase, and find ourselves out in Queen's Gate, by the entrance shown in our sketch, and by which, had we come from the westward, it would have been better to have begun our tour. To see the collections properly would take a week; suffice it for us that we have shown you where they can be found.

And now let us call at another museum, open on the same days. This is the Indian Museum, farther up the Exhibition Road, and also rejoicing in a very seedy-looking approach. The Architectural Court has a grand display of elaborate workmanship, and amid many things of interest is King Theebaw's treasure, captured at Mandalay during the last Burmese campaign. Then there is the Lower Gallery, with tapestries and fabrics and tents; and above it the Upper Gallery, with thousands of things Indian, that all should see who are interested in the East, among the most striking objects being a collection of armour, and the banner of Ayoub Khan, who was beaten at Candahar in 1880. You may not perhaps care for these things, but go and see, and try all the rooms before you come out. The Indian Museum is not a small place by any means.

Let us take another museum, and this time let it be the Art Museum, popularly known as the South Kensington Museum, and, as far as most people know, the only South Kensington Museum. Here, again, there is much to see, but "life is short and art is long," and to healthy boys art sometimes proves rather too long at South Kensington. The beautifully-tiled floors and highly-decorated walls, and the cases of thousands of works of patience and skill, are just a little tiring to the uninitiated, who are apt to seek refuge in the very excellent refreshment-rooms. There is, indeed, so much to see and admire that it is as well to walk through the place first, and then set to work on the particular section in which we may be interested.

Let us take such a preliminary stroll together. The museum is open free on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays, from ten o'clock in the morning till ten o'clock at night; on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (the students' days) the museum closes practically at four o'clock, and sixpence is charged for admission. On Mondays and Saturdays the place is crowded, for every visitor to London goes to see it, and it is well worth seeing. It is the most richly decorated casket of gems the world has. The structural work, the iron columns, ribs, and girders are all exposed to view,

and treated as surfaces for ornament; even the bolts and rivets form decorative details. The walls are encircled with mosaics and frescoes, and the floors are of patterned tile-work. Gradually the design is being completed, and, despite much ignorant obstruction, South Kensington has fulfilled its promise, and given the nation a true Palace of Art; and the people are not slow to appreciate it.

Let us go in with the crowd; and let us get out of the crowd at once. The crowd goes straight on, as is the manner with crowds. We will keep to the left-hand side of the Architectural Court, and at the far corner enter the Ancient Sculpture Court. Here are casts of nearly all the famous statues of the Greeks, shown off to perfection by the lofty, well-lighted room. At the left-hand corner we leave this court, and enter the Textile Fabric Gallery. We are in a sort of cloister, with the windows on one side opening out on to a beautiful lawn. In this corridor the most familiar object is the copy of the Bayeux Tapestry, of which mention is made in all school histories. It is more remarkable for quaintness than beauty, and is chiefly valuable for showing the amount of our advance, on the principle of the specimen of handwriting "before I took six lessons." However, we find out "Hic est Willelmus" in honour of the Conqueror, and notice the bad treatment of "Haroldus," and leave the rest of the 214 feet for another occasion. At the far corner is a heavy curtain, which we hold aside as we enter the Science and Educational Library. This is a splendid room, of great height, and simple, graceful treatment that adds to the height and lightness. It is the most cheerful-looking library in the kingdom, and is well worth a peep.

Up the stairs by the side is the Crank Collection of sketches and engravings, including many well-known book illustrations. But if we go up we must come down again, as there is no passage through; and so we go straight away from the library-door, along another cloister full of ornamental woodwork. This corridor, which runs under the Art Schools, ends at the entrance from Exhibition Road. Turning to the right we traverse another cloister, where are some "rooms in Damascus," and the Persian and Saracenic Collections. We come out at the Picture Gallery stairs in the corner of the North Court, and, keeping along the same side, reach the Fernery, in front of which is the clock. There are three courts left for us to examine—the North, the South, and the Architectural. In the North Court the objects are all of Italian workmanship. It is more than a hundred feet square, and is thirty-three feet high. Leaving it by the East Arcade, where there is a great show of vestments, we are in the gorgeous South Court, one of the most noticeable objects in which is an iron osprey, made by a Japanese, of whom it is said that "under heaven there never was a smith the equal of Miyochin Muncharu." To the east of the South Court are the Oriental Courts, decorated by Owen Jones. The South Court itself is due to the taste of Godfrey Sykes. In its alcoves are thirty-six portraits, in mosaic, of eminent men of all ages, which are well worth looking at, but are best seen from the gallery, as are Sir Frederick Leighton's big frescoes of the Arts of War and the Arts of Peace that fill the north and south lunettes. Leaving the South Court by the south entrance, we are in the Architectural Court, which is divided into halves by a corridor. It was from the right-hand half as we now enter that we began the round of the ground-floor that we have now completed.

Returning to the South Court, we go under the West Arcade, through the Musical Instrument Collection, to the refreshment-

corridor, in which are J. G. Longh's famous little statues of Puck and Titania, and the group of the Babes in the Wood, and an especially fine Madonna window. Close to it, and in front of us, is a flight of stairs to the Ceramic Gallery, up which lies our way.

We need not linger among the pottery. The gallery is above the refreshment-corridor, and to the left we pass the entrance to the Lecture Theatre. At the end we are in the Forster Collection, with its drawings by Maclise, and its manuscripts of Charles Dickens's books. We are, in fact, among the autographs, and there are specimens of the letter-writing of most of our eminent authors. Making our way down this line of galleries, we leave the Forster paintings for those bought by the Royal Academy under the Chantrey bequest. Magnificent pictures are all these. Unfortunately for the Londoners, some of them are often away on loan, so that you are never sure of seeing any particular one. The finest now in the gallery is Herkomer's "Found," but "Britannia's Realm" is the pride of the show when it is home from a cruise. Next to the Chantrey room is the Water Colour Collection, in four rooms. The second is alongside the first, the third end on to the second, and the fourth next to it; in fact, we are going back towards the autographs by a parallel road. At the end, to the left, is the gallery over the South Court, with the Arts of War fresco. On the left is a Singing Gallery, overhanging the North Court; to the right is the Prince Consort's Gallery, in which are kept the most valuable objects in the exhibition. This leads us to the South Gallery and the Arts of

Peace. To the right is the Art Library, with Mr. G. F. Watts's pictures on the staircase; to the left, past the fresco, we find our way to the Jones Collection of furniture and paintings, with the "Art Studies" panels along the wall. Through this we get into the Picture Galleries proper, where we meet with many old friends—Landseer, Leslie, and Milreedy. We then, through the Raphael Cartoon Room, complete our round. The door at the top of the stairs leads to the School of Art; the stairs lead down to the North Court. By turning to the right at their foot we can go out into Exhibition Road by the Science Schools; by walking straightforward across the courts we reach the door in the Brompton Road by which we entered. That is enough for the present about South Kensington Museum; we have said so much because so many people come away without having seen half of it.

There is another museum under the management of the Science and Art Department. It is at the other end of London, at Bethnal Green, in Cambridge Road, at the end of Bethnal Green Road, which runs out of Shoreditch. The railway-station nearest to it is Cambridge Heath. The front is new; the bulk of the building is the old "Brompton Boilers," in which South Kensington Museum began thirty years ago. The collections at present at Bethnal Green are mostly on loan. The Food Museum journeyed thither from South Kensington. The most attractive feature for boys is the Doubleday Collection of butterflies and moths. In the Picture Gallery is the extremely valuable and inte-

resting series of National Portraits, placed here till a safe resting-place is found for them in the west. Here are our kings and queens, and admirals and generals, and statesmen and inventors, and literary and artistic eminences, real and false, all, presumably, looking their best. Very few of them look their character it must be confessed, but this is owing, perhaps, to the stages through which the presentment has had to pass. It is not here how our great men looked, but how the artist thought they looked, and how closely his hand interpreted what his eye desired. When we get two portraits of the same man the allowance necessary to be made on this score is painfully obvious. A good portrait is not necessarily a good likeness. The first time we saw this collection of portraits we experimented on it regarding our own ideas of physiognomy. We guessed what the man was before we looked at his name. Alas! we were hopelessly wrong, and came reluctantly to the conclusion that either we were sadly ignorant or that a good many of these celebrities must either have been libelled, or had "ghosts" that did the work for them! One thing do when you visit the Portrait Gallery. Buy a catalogue. It costs a shilling, and is well worth the money. The museum itself is free, except on Wednesdays, when the charge for admission is sixpence. On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays the doors are not closed till ten o'clock at night. No boy interested in his country's history should come to London without visiting the National Portrait Gallery.

(To be continued.)

THROUGH CENTRAL ASIA.*

BY REV. HENRY LANSDSELL, D.D.

NOT the least of the objects of a book of travels is that it should enable the reader to understand and appreciate the merits of the foreign people amongst whom the author has dwelt. That this has been so constantly kept in view by Dr. Lansdell is due much of the commendation with which his works on Russia have been welcomed. This was even more conspicuous in "Russian Central Asia" than in "Through Siberia," and now in the popular version of his more southerly trip, published under the title of "Through Central Asia," it forms the main feature; the effort throughout has been to tell the story in a straightforward way, and on every occasion do justice to the work now in progress in the East under Russian influence.

The total distance travelled was 12,145 miles, of which 5,004 were accomplished by rail, 3,438 by water, 771 mounted on horse or camel, and 2,932 on wheels by the hire of 904 horses and 330 drivers! The chief endeavour of the journey was to distribute the Scriptures and visit the prisons in Central Asia. As the route lay through new countries, inquiries were set afoot as to the need there existed for making new translations, and as to the openings that presented themselves for promoting generally the aims of the British and Foreign Bible Society and Religious Tract Society, who paid the greater part of the cost, and provided the books and tracts which formed so large a portion of the baggage. The road went through Petersburg, Moscow, Nijni-Novgorod, Perm, Ekaterinburg, Timmen, Omak,

Senupolatinsk, Kuldja, Vierny, Tashkend, Khokand—mere names on the map these to most of us, but all by the traveller made to live—to Samarkand. And at Samarkand let us hear what the author has to say about his visit to the tomb of the great conqueror Tamerlane:

"On entering the principal doorway we found ourselves in an octagonal chamber ten paces in diameter, wainscoted to a height of nearly five feet with yashma, or jasper, as I was told, and as is commonly said, but which Dr. Schuyler asserts to be 'hexagonal plates of finely-carved transparent gypsum.' I brought away a piece found among the *débris* outside, and on showing it at the Museum of Natural History in South Kensington, it has been pronounced to be white, translucent, and massive carbonate of lime. Above this are three rows of niches carved in sandstone, a foot and a half high, then inscriptions, formerly blue, eighteen inches in height, also in niches; and above all this a continuance of niches, beautifully carved, and crowned by a fine arch. The colour of the whole is greyish-white, and looks somewhat dingy and old. In the eastern wall, facing Mecca, is an arched recess called the *Mikhrab*, wherein rest the remains of Said-Mir-Omar, son of one of Timur's preceptors.

"Opposite the doorway by which we entered stood a pillar, perhaps four feet high, surmounted by a dome, under which was formerly kept burning, says Ufalyev, 'the lamp of perpetual fire.' I cannot answer for the perpetuity of the fire at Samarkand, but I found there a dirty three-lipped lamp of unusual form, left probably by a pilgrim, and the like to which I was told I could get

in the bazaar; whereupon I begged the mullah in charge to let me have that, and I gave him money to purchase another in its place. I was glad to have secured this lamp from so interesting a spot, and the more so because in my subsequent wanderings I did not meet with another of precisely the same form. The pillar is said to indicate, I believe, where the head lies, and near it is erected a rough pole, from which hangs, as usual over a Muhammadan hero, a banner and horse tail.

"On the floor of the mausoleum, surrounded by an open-work railing of carved alabaster, are seven cenotaphs. Near the pillar already mentioned is the highest but least elegant one, that of Mir-Said-Barak, or Mir-Kulan-Said-Baraka, Timur's preceptor and friend. In a line with this is Tamerlane's own monument, and near it that of his grandson, Ulug-Beg, who, according to the inscription, died in 1449. The other stones cover the graves of Timur's descendants or friends. The one stone really remarkable, said indeed to be unique, is that over the tomb of Tamerlane. It occupies the exact centre of the mosque. The other monuments are of white marble, but his is greenish black, six feet long, seventeen inches wide, and fourteen inches thick, and of a single block of nephrite or jade, the largest monolith of that material known. The surface is covered with tracery, and around the edge is a complicated inscription in antique letters, giving, says Dr. Schuyler, 'Timur's name and titles, together with those of his ancestors, and the date of his death, 1405.'

"The floor of the mausoleum near the monuments is covered with hexagonal stones of what is said to be jasper, but

* "Through Central Asia." Published by Sampson Low, Marston, and Co., St. Dunstan's House, Fetter Lane, E.C. 1897.

more probably is of the same stone as the wainscoting. A broad spiral flight of steps of grey burnt brick leads into the crypt, where are the graves, and over them slabs of white limestone, seven of them being arranged exactly under their respective representatives above. These, too, are nearly covered with quotations, it is said, from the Koran. The Gur-Emir was built by Timur over the remains of his preceptor Said in A.D. 1386, some time before his own death. Timur died in Otrar, within 400 miles of Samarkand, but his body, according to his own directions, was laid by the side of that of his preceptor. The famous monolith was brought to Samarkand in 1415. Some say that it was the present of a Mongol princess. Devotees and pilgrims used to flock with great reverence to Timur's grave, but the place seems to have fallen into neglect until the coming of the Russians."

From Samarkand the pilgrimage was resumed to Shahr-i-sabz, where an interview was had with the famous Emir, who treated the missionary like a prince, so that his experiences were far more agreeable than those of Vambéry, as related in our part for July, 1884. One of the most interesting of the doctor's Bokhara sketches is that of the boys at school:

"As we were taking a morning ride during the Saturday of our stay at Bokhara, I inquired the meaning of a sing-song noise that proceeded from a house we were passing, and learned that it was a school. We dismounted immediately, and, entering, found therein from twenty-five to thirty scholars, of ages from six to thirteen. It was a good example of one of the maktab, or lower schools, just as in the medresses we had specimens of the upper schools, of Central Asia. Both are usually attached to the mosques, and maintained on the wakuf, or foundation; but if the schools are not so maintained they are kept up partly at the expense of the people generally and of the parents of the scholars. The teachers of the lower schools are usually chosen from among the inhabitants of the district in which the school is situated, and who are taxed at the rate of from sixpence to one shilling per house for the teachers' support.

"The building we entered was small and simple enough—a single room roofed with a dome, having several doors instead of windows, and niches around for shoes, clothes, etc. On the floor, and parallel to the walls, were raised benches, about fourteen inches apart, consisting of beams of wood ten inches high. The pupils sometimes sit on these, or, as we saw them, on the ground, their books resting on the beams. Tables or desks there are none.

"The pupils sit with their faces towards the centre of the room, in the direction of the teacher, who is in the middle of them, and thus, like Saul of Tarsus, they are 'brought up at his feet.' The floor is usually covered with plaited-reed mats, or simple straw. I asked how much the scholars paid, and found that their fees were partly tendered in kind, and by way of presents, but M. Kühn, who has written upon the subject somewhat fully, mentions as an ordinary school fee on beginning from threepence to one shilling per month, with a present of cakes and raisins.

"In these lower schools the most unsophisticated simplicity reigns. There is no division into classes; but by the side of one scholar sing-songing the alphabet is another learning the verses of Khoja Hafiz, or not less loudly reading the Koran. In the school we entered they all read together, swinging their bodies backwards and forwards, though one boy was permitted to read alone for us to hear.

"I asked about school-hours and holi-

days, and found that the boys are present from six in the morning till five at night, with an interval of two hours at noon. They go on, moreover, all the year round, except Fridays, and a week at each of the three Muhammadan festivals. On Thursday each pupil usually brings his teacher a specially prepared cake, and on that day also the studies close at noon; the teacher, before dismissing his pupils, examining their nails, and banging their heads with a book if they are not found clean. But Thursday is also the day for paying off disciplinary scores. Thus, if a boy has played truant, some of his fellows are sent in search, and, on bringing him back, the culprit is laid on the floor, his feet lifted in a noose, and he is bastinadoed, the right of giving the first blow belonging to his captors, as a reward for finding him. On Thursday, too, the teacher usually shows

them the attitudes of devotion, and concludes by reciting a prayer.

"Education among the Mussulman women is at a very low ebb. There are, nevertheless, in most towns one or two bilikalfas, whose duty it is to teach girls, for the most part those of the rich. In the school we entered at Bokhara I had a little conversation with the teacher, and thought to surprise him by saying that in some of our English schools we have as many as a thousand children; to which he replied with the greatest calmness, as if to give me a Roland for my Oliver, that they had many schools, but only about twenty-five scholars in each. His was only one of many instances wherein the self-complacency and ignorance of the Asiatic struck me forcibly, for they seemed not to have the least idea that they were behind other people or needed any improvement."

(To be continued.)



OUR NOTE BOOK.

EXCITING CAPTURE OF A SLAVE DHOW.

A despatch was recently received at the Admiralty from Capt. Robert Woodward, R.N., C.B., Senior Naval Officer at Zanzibar, describing the most exciting and gallant capture of a slave dhow. Capt. Woodward writes from H.M.S. *Turquoise*: "I have the honour to enclose herewith correspondence with reference to the capture of an Arab dhow and 53 slaves by Lieut. Frederick F. Fegen, in the pinnace of her Majesty's ship under my command, at Pemba, on the 30th May. On the dhow attempting to run down the pinnace with the intention of carrying her by boarding, Lieutenant Fegen immediately rushed forward to repel the Arabs (the dhow having caught the pinnace's forestay with her bowsprit), seven of whom were ready to board. He promptly shot two with his revolver, then drew his cutlass and ran another through the body. Whilst thus engaged he received a very severe sword cut on the right arm from an Arab who came to assist the one he was engaged with. This Arab was run through the body by John W. Pearson, A.E., before he had time to inflict further injury. Notwithstanding his severe wounds, this officer still continued fighting with his cutlass until the dhow got clear. At this time there were three men in the bottom of the boat wounded, the remainder of the crew, three in number, fighting hard and supporting him. When the dhow got clear nine Arabs had already been killed. No sooner had this occurred than she endeavoured to escape. Lieutenant Fegen, picking up his dinghy, gave chase, and a running fight was maintained until the helmsman of the dhow was shot, when she broached to and capsized in shallow water. He immediately anchored his boat as near to the sunken dhow as possible, and proceeded to rescue the slaves, the four unwounded men saving as many as they could by means of the dinghy, and also

jumping overboard. Fifty-three all told were saved. I am informed by Mr. Holmwood, Consul-General, that of the thirteen Arabs on board the dhow nine were the most notorious slave-dealers in Pemba, and in all there were upwards of twenty armed men, the arms being snider rifles and swords. Of the thirteen Arabs, eleven have been killed, which will doubtless deal a heavy blow against the slave trade. Two Arabs succeeded in reaching the shore, one of whom died subsequently of his wounds, and the other escaped. Measures have been adopted for his capture. I cannot speak too highly of the brave and gallant behaviour of Lieutenant Fegen and his crew. In rushing forward and preventing the Arabs from boarding his boat, he in my opinion saved annihilation. The advantage of numbers (three to one at least) and position was decidedly in favour of the dhow. He was backed up most bravely by his boat's crew. Four received severe wounds, one since having died."

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

All manuscripts should be sent to 56, Paternoster Row, and must have the name and address of the sender clearly written thereon, and in any accompanying letter the title of the MS. must be given. No notice can be taken of anonymous communications. Writers are recommended to keep copies of their MSS.; miscellaneous contributions being sent in too great numbers to be returned unless stamps are sent to cover postage. Payment for accepted manuscripts is made on publication. The receipt conveys the copyright of manuscripts to the Trustees of the Religious Tract Society, with liberty for them, at their discretion, to publish such works separately. Reproduction by authors on their own account must be the subject of special arrangement.

A letter from home

Dear Tommy

"Have you been a good boy?"

I.



II.



III.



Correspondence.

S. P.—1. Saturn is 572,135,000 miles from the sun. Its year consists of 10,769 days, and the length of its day is 10hrs. 29min. 17sec. Owing to this rapid rotation Saturn is not as spherical as the earth, the compression at its poles being such that its polar diameter is to its equatorial diameter as 8 is to 9. The equatorial diameter is 72,250 miles. 2. Saturn has eight moons and three groups of rings. The breadth of the ring system is about 37,000 miles, and the rings are not more than 100 miles thick. Saturn has cloud belts like Jupiter.

JOINER.—1. Apply to Messrs. Cassell and Co., or to Mr. E. Stanford, Charing Cross, for a "Guide to the Civil Service." Particulars as to each branch can, however, be obtained on application to the Secretary, Civil Service Commissioners. 2. Technical classes are held at the City of London College, King's College, Strand, and the City Guilds Institute, South Kensington.

A. P. G.—By a "commonplace book" you doubtless mean a note-book. Elaborate schemes of classification have been proposed and entered upon for such things, but have nearly always broken down in practice. The best plan is to use an ordinary note-book, paging it as you go, and writing straight on; have a full index, and classify the entries as you index. For the plan of a good index see answer to RALPH on page 544, Vol. IX.

T. X.—1. The average height of Englishmen is 5ft. 7½in. The height depends a good deal on social condition and nurture. Men who work with their heads are taller than those who work with their hands; there are exceptions, of course, but "the big brain in the little body" theory is not borne out by statistics. The criminal classes are the shortest in stature, the average being 5ft. 5½in. The professional classes are the tallest in stature, the average being 5ft. 9in. 2. The average height of the Yankee and the Britisher is exactly the same; and the average height of the English-speaking races is more than two inches greater than that of the rest of the world. 3. There is an Anthropometric Committee reporting to the British Association, and their report will supply you with details.

TARTAN.—There is no use in your attempting chemistry unless you intend to experiment as you read. The best plan would be to join one of the Science and Art classes. The knowledge you acquire would be of service to you even if you did not put it to professional use.

H. MATTHEWS.—1. See our article, "A Chat about Engine Driving," last September. 2. Stephenson's engine is, with the others, at the Patent Museum, South Kensington.

CAVALRYMAN.—If you get a commission you might rise to be a field-marshal; but we do not think you would. Suppose you limit your notions to your becoming a sergeant?

NERO and FRANK.—The article is out of print. Mr. Wilson, of 156, Minories, publishes a shilling book on "How to Make Knots, Bends, and Splices as Used at Sea."

E. A. H.—1. Asbestos is a fibrous mineral allied to hornblende. The wicks of the lamps in which the sacred fire was burnt in the temples of old were made of asbestos. It is found in fibres that are sometimes as fine as those of flax. 2. Shoot with both eyes open.

A. E. D.—Cents are worth a halfpenny each. Timbre is the French for stamp. Kop is the short for kopeck, worth two-fifths of a penny. The other coins are worth a halfpenny each.

J. L. (Plaistow).—1. The price of the eighth volume, in cloth, is eight shillings. 2. Professor Hoffman's conjuring articles may possibly appear in our forthcoming volume of "Indoor Sports and Pastimes."

S. W. P. COWAN.—1. Mr. Theodore Wood is a son of the Rev. J. G. Wood. 2. No church that seeks to do its duty need fear rivalry, but should rather rejoice at every sincere effort made to glorify God and extend Christ's kingdom upon earth.

READER.—For all about rabbits read the articles in our back volumes, and our "Doings for the Month."

E. V. W.—For the articles on "Ventri-locuism," obtain our "Indoor Sports and Pastimes."

LOCOMOTIVE.—Certainly, provided the parody be original.

M. WARD.—Yes.

GERMANY.—Fill up pores of wood with creosote, then varnish.

CARDBOARD MODELLING.—A correspondent writes from Hereford: "I have made a cardboard engine according to directions given in B. O. P. I sent it to the Church of England Temperance Society's Industrial and Art Exhibition which was held here, when it gained a first-prize of 7s. 6d. I was twelve years old last May."

C. H. N.—Better put him in the Navy. Full particulars can be obtained from your nearest post-office. He is not too old. He should go to the nearest Marine recruiting-office or Coastguard station, or direct to H.M.S. St. Vincent, Portsmouth.

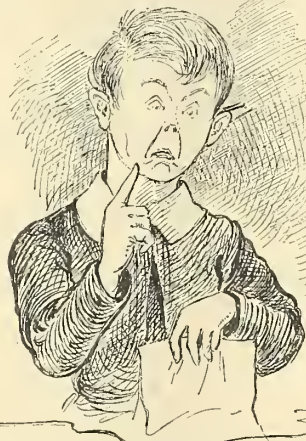
E. B. F. (Hampstead).—You will find just the information you seek on Canoe Building in the forthcoming volume of the "Boy's Own Bookshelf," entitled "Indoor Games and Amusements."

CEPHALUS SQUILL.—The Customs duties have to be paid by the person taking the goods out of bond. The duty increases the price of the goods by the amount of the duty and the interest on the capital necessarily in hand to pay it. Hence the persons who use the goods are said to pay the tax.

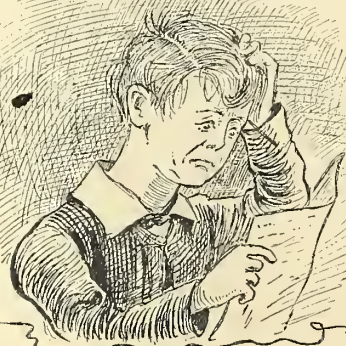
J. REID.—We have given coloured plates of the flags of all nations, the flags of the leading shipowners, and the rigs of British ships; but all the parts containing them are now out of print. You might get something of the sort from a nautical bookseller at Glasgow, Liverpool, or London. Try Philip and Son, John Street, Liverpool; or Wilson, of 156, Minories London.

"We shall expect to see a lot of prizes"

III.



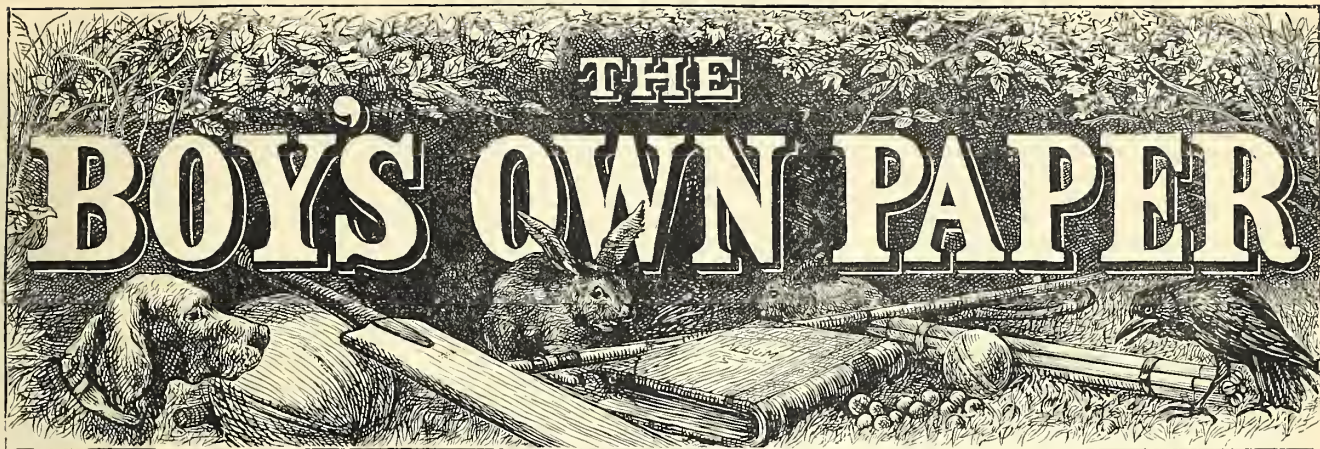
"owing to circumstances V. at home you will have to—"



"stay at school instead of coming home these holidays"

VI





No. 471.—Vol. X.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1888.

Price One Penny.
[ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]

THE MIDDY AND THE MOORS.

By R. M. BALLANTYNE,

Author of "The Prairie Chief," "Twice Bought," etc., etc.

CHAPTER III.—THE BAGNIO—OUR HERO SEES SOMETHING OF MISERY, AND IS SOLD AS A SLAVE.

THERE are some things in this world so unbelievable that even when we know them to be true we still remain in a state of semi-scepticism.

When our unfortunate midshipman awoke next morning, raised himself on



"You's set your heart on dat useless ijit."

his elbow, and felt that all his bones and muscles were stiff and pained from lying on a stone floor, it was some time before he could make out where he was, or recall the events of the last few days. The first thing that revived his sluggish memory was the scuttling away, in anxious haste, of a scorpion that had sought and found comfortable quarters during the night under the lee of his right leg. Starting up, he crushed the reptile with his foot.

"You will get used to that," said a quietly sarcastic voice with a slightly foreign accent, close to him.

The speaker was a middle-aged man with grey hair, hollow cheeks, and deep sunken eyes.

"They trouble us a little at first," he continued, "but, as I have said, we get used to them. It is long since I cared for scorpions."

"Have you, then, been long here?" asked Foster.

"Yes. Twelve years."

"A prisoner?—a slave?" asked the midshipman, anxiously.

"A prisoner, yes. A slave, yes—a mummified man; a dead thing with life enough to work, but not yet quite a brute, more is the pity, for then I would not care! But here I have been for twelve years—long, long years! It has seemed to me an eternity."

"It is a long time to be a slave. God help you, poor man!" exclaimed Foster.

"You will have to offer that prayer for yourself, young man," returned the other; "you will need help more than I. At first we are fools, but time makes us wise. It even teaches Englishmen that they are not unconquerable."

The man spoke pointedly and in a harsh sarcastic tone which tended to check Foster's new-born compassion; nevertheless, he continued to address his fellow-sufferer in a sympathetic spirit.

"You are not an Englishman, I think," he said, "though you speak our language well."

"No, I am French, but my wife is English."

"Your wife! Is she here also?"

"Thank God—no," replied the Frenchman with a sudden burst of seriousness which was evidently genuine. "She is in England, trying to make up the sum of my ransom. But she will never do it. She is poor. She has her daughter to provide for besides herself, and we have no friends. No, I have hoped for twelve years, and hope is now dead—*nearly* dead."

The overwhelming thoughts that this information raised in Foster's mind rendered him silent for a few minutes. The idea of the poor wife in England toiling for twelve years almost hopelessly to ransom her husband, filled his susceptible heart with pity. Then the thought of his mother and Minnie—who were also poor—toiling for years to procure his own ransom, filled him with oppressive dread. To throw the depressing subject off his mind, he asked how the Frenchman had guessed that he was an Englishman before he had heard him speak.

"I know your countrymen," he answered, "by their bearing. Besides, you have been muttering in your sleep about 'Mother and Minnie.' If the latter is, as I suppose, your sweetheart

—your *fiancée*—the sooner you get her out of your mind the better, for you will never see her more."

Again Foster felt repelled by the harsh cynicism of the man, yet at the same time he felt strangely attracted to him, a fact which he showed more by his tones than his words when he said,

"My friend, you are not yet enrolled among the infallible prophets. Whether I shall ever again see those whom I love depends upon the will of God. But I don't wonder that with your sad experience you should give way to despair. For myself, I will cling to the hope that God will deliver me, and I would advise you to do the same."

"How many I have seen, who had the sanguine temperament, like yours, awakened and crushed," returned the Frenchman. "See, there is one of them," he added, pointing to a cell nearly opposite, in which a form was seen lying on its back, straight and motionless. "That young man was such another as you are when he first came here."

"Is he dead?" asked the midshipman, with a look of pity.

"Yes—he died in the night while you slept. It was attending to him in his last moments that kept me awake. He was nothing to me but a fellow-slave and sufferer, but I was fond of him. He was hard to conquer, but they managed it at last for they beat him to death."

"Then they did *not* conquer him," exclaimed Foster, with a gush of indignant pity. "To beat a man to death is to murder, not to conquer. But you called him a young man. The corpse that lies there has thin grey hair and a wrinkled brow."

"Nevertheless, he was young—not more than twenty-seven—but six years of this life brought him to what you see. He might have lived longer, as I have, had he been submissive!"

Before Foster could reply, the grating of a rusty key in the door caused a movement as well as one or two sighs and groans among the slaves, for the keepers had come to summon them to work. The Frenchman rose and followed the others with a look of sullen indifference. Most of them were without fetters, but a few strong young men wore chains and fetters more or less heavy, and Foster judged from this circumstance, as well as their expressions, that these were rebellious subjects whom it was difficult to tame.

Much to his surprise, the youth found that he was not called on to join his comrades in misfortune, but was left behind in solitude. While casting about in his mind as to what this could mean, he observed in a corner the two rolls of black bread which he had received the previous night, and which, not being hungry at the time, he had neglected. As a healthy appetite was by that time obtruding itself on his attention, he took hold of one and began to eat. It was not attractive, but, not being particular, he consumed it. He even took up the other and ate that also, after which he sighed and wished for more! As there was no more to be had, he went to the fountain in the court and washed his breakfast down with water.

About two hours later the door was

again opened, and a man in the uniform of a janissary entered. Fixing a keen glance on the young captive, he bade him in broken English rise and follow.

By this time the lesson of submission had been sufficiently impressed on our hero to induce him to accord prompt obedience. He followed his guide into the street, where he walked along until they arrived at a square, on one side of which stood a large mosque. Here marketing was being carried on to a considerable extent, and, as he threaded his way through the various groups, he could not help being impressed with the extreme simplicity of the mode of procedure, for it seemed to him that all a man wanted to enable him to set himself up in trade was a few articles of any kind—old or new, it did not matter which—with a day's lease of about four feet square of the market pavement. There the retail trader squatted, smoked his pipe, and calmly awaited the decrees of Fate!

One of these small traders he noted particularly while his conductor stopped to converse with a friend. He was an old man, evidently a descendant of Ishmael, and clothed in what seemed to be a ragged cast-off suit that had belonged to Abraham or Isaac. He carried his shop on his arm in the shape of a basket, out of which he took a little bit of carpet, and spread it close to where they stood. On this he sat down and slowly extracted from his basket, and spread on the ground before him, a couple of old locks, several knives, an old brass candlestick, an assortment of rusty keys, a flat-iron, and half a dozen other articles of household furniture. Before any purchases were made, however, the janissary moved on, and Foster had to follow.

Passing through two or three tortuous and narrow lanes, which, however, were thickly studded with shops—that is, with holes in the wall, in which merchandise was displayed outside as well as in—they came to a door which was strictly guarded. Passing the guards, they found themselves in a court, beyond which they could see another court which looked like a hall of justice—or injustice, as the case might be. What strengthened Foster in the belief that such was its character, was the fact that, at the time they entered, an officer was sitting cross-legged on a bench, smoking comfortably, while in front of him a man lay on his face with his soles turned upwards, whilst an executioner was applying to them the punishment of the *bastinado*. The culprit could not have been a great offender, for, after a sharp yell or two, he was allowed to rise and limp away.

Our hero was led before the functionary who looked like a judge. He regarded the midshipman with no favour. We should have recorded that Foster, when blown out to sea, as already described, had leaped on the pirate's deck without coat or vest. As he was still in this dismantled condition, and had neither been washed nor combed since that event occurred, his appearance at this time was not prepossessing.

"Who are you, and where do you come from?" was the first question put by an interpreter.

Of course, Foster told the exact truth about himself. After he had

done so, the judge and interpreter consulted together, glancing darkly at their prisoner the while. Then the judge smiled significantly and nodded his head. The interpreter turned to a couple of negroes, who stood ready to execute any commands, apparently, and said a few words to them. They at once took hold of Foster and fastened a rope to his wrist. As they did so the interpreter turned to the poor youth and said,

"What you tell is all lies."

"Indeed, indeed it is not," exclaimed the midshipman fervently.

"Go!" said the interpreter.

A twitch from the rope at the same moment recalled our hero to his right mind; and the remembrance of the poor wretch who had just suffered the bastinado, and also of Peter the Great's oft-repeated reference to "whacking," had the effect of crushing the spirit of rebellion which had just begun to arise in his breast. Thus he was conducted ignominiously into the street and back to the market square, where he was made to stand with a number of other men, who, like himself, appeared to be slaves. What they were waiting there for he could not tell, but he was soon enlightened, for after half an hour a dignified-looking Moor in flowing apparel came forward, examined one of the captives, felt his muscles, made him open his mouth, and otherwise show his paces, after which he paid a sum of money for him and a negro attendant led him away.

"I'm to be sold as a slave," Foster involuntarily groaned aloud.

"Like all the rest of us," growled a stout sailor-like man who stood at his elbow.

Foster turned quickly to look at him, but a sudden movement in the group separated them after the first glance at each other.

By way of relieving his overcharged feelings he tried to interest himself in the passers-by. This, however, he found very difficult, until he observed a sturdy young Kabyle coming along with two enormous feathery bundles suspended over his right shoulder, one hanging before, the other behind. To his surprise these bundles turned out to be living fowls, tied by the legs and hanging with their heads down. There could not, he thought, have been fewer than thirty or forty birds in each bundle, and it occurred to him at once that they had probably been carried to market thus from some distance in the country. At all events, the young Kabyle seemed to be dusty and warm with walking. He even seemed fatigued, for, when about to pass the group of slaves, he stopped to rest and flung down his load. The shock of the fall must have snapped a number of legs, for a tremendous cackle burst from the bundles as they struck the ground.

This raised the thought in Foster's mind that he could hope for no mercy where such wanton cruelty was not even deemed worthy of notice by the bystanders; but the sound of a familiar voice put all other thoughts to flight.

"Dis way, massa, you's sure to git fuss-rate fellers here. We brought 'in in on'y yesterday—all fresh like new-laid eggs."

The speaker was Peter the Great. The man to whom he spoke was a Moor of tall stature and of somewhat advanced years.

Delighted more than he could express, in his degraded and forlorn condition, at this unlooked-for meeting with his black friend, Foster was about to claim acquaintance, when the negro advanced to the group among whom he stood, exclaiming loudly,

"Here dey am, massa, dis way."

Then turning suddenly on Foster with a fierce expression, he shouted, "What you lookin' at, you babby-faced ijit? Hab you nebber seen a handsome nigger before, dat you look all t'ander-struck of a heap? Can't you hold your tongue, you chatterin' monkey?" and with that, although Foster had not uttered a syllable, the negro fetched him a sounding smack on the cheek, to the great amusement of the bystanders.

Well was it then for our middy that it flashed into his mind that Peter the Great, being the most astounding "hyperkrite" on earth, was at work in his deceptive way, else would he have certainly retaliated and brought on himself swift punishment—for slaves were not permitted to resent injuries or create riots. As it was, he cast down his eyes, flushed scarlet, and restrained himself!

"Now, massa," continued the negro, turning to the fine, sailor-like man who had spoken to Foster a few minutes before, "here's a nice lookin' man. Strong an' healfy—fit for anyting no doubt."

"Ask him if he understands gardenin'," said the Moor.

We may remark, in passing, that Peter the Great and his owner had a peculiar mode of carrying on conversation. The latter addressed his slave in the *Ligua Franca*, while Peter replied in his own nigger-English, which the Moor appeared to understand perfectly. Why they carried it on thus we cannot explain, but it is our duty to record the fact.

"Understand gardenin'!" exclaimed the sailor in supreme contempt, "I should think not. Wot d'you take me for, you black baboon! Do I look like a gardener? Ploughin' an' diggin' I knows nothin' about wotsomever, though I *have* ploughed the waves many a day an' I'm considered a fast-rate hand at diggin' into wittles."

"Oh! massa, das de man for your money! Buy him, quick!" cried the negro, with a look of earnest entreaty at his master. "He say he's ploughed many a day, an' 's a fuss-rate hand at diggin'. Do buy 'im!"

But the Moor would not buy him. Either he understood the sailor's language to some extent, or that inveterate obstinacy of which Peter had made mention as being part of his character was beginning to assert itself.

"Ask this one what he knows about it," said the Moor, pointing to a thin young man, whose sprightly expression showed that he had not yet fully realised what fate was in store for him in the pirates' stronghold.

"Wich is it you mean, massa, dis one?" said Peter, purposely mistaking and turning to Foster. "Oh! you needn't ask about *him*. He not wuff his salt.

I could tell him at a mile off for a lazy, useless feller. Gib more trouble dan he's wuff. Dere now, dis looks a far better man," he added, laying hold of the thin sprightly youth and turning him round. "What d'ye tink ob dis one?"

"I *told* you to ask that one," replied the Moor, sharply.

"Can you do gardenin', you feller?" asked Peter.

"Oui, oui—un peu," replied the youth, who happened to be French, but understood English?"

"None ob your wee-wees an' poo-poops to me. Can't you speak English?"

"Oui, yes, I gardin ver' leetle."

"Jus' so. Das de man for us, massa, if you won't hab de oder. I likes de look ob 'im. I don't tink he'll be hard on de wittles, an' he's so t'in dat he won't puspire much when he works in de sun in summer. Do buy *him*, massa."

But "massa" would not buy him, and looked hard for some time at our hero.

"I see how it am," said the negro, growing sulky. "You's set your heart on dat useless ijit. Do come away, massa, it ud break my heart to lib wid sich a feller."

This seemed to clinch the matter, for the Moor purchased the objectionable slave, ordered Peter the Great to bring him along, and left the market-place.

"Didn't I tell you I's de greatest hyperkrite as ever was born?" said Peter, in a low voice, when sufficiently far in rear to prevent being overheard by his master.

"You certainly did," replied Foster, who felt something almost like satisfaction at this change in his fate; "you are the most perfect hypocrite that I ever came across, and I am not sorry for it. Only I hope you won't deceive your friends."

"Honour bright!" said the negro, with a roll of the eyes and a solemnity of expression that told far more than words could express.

"Can you tell me," asked the middy, as they walked along, "what has become of that fine-looking girl that was captured with her father and mother by your captain?"

"Don't say *my* captain, sar," replied Peter, sternly. "He no captain ob mine. I was on'y loaned to him. But I knows nuffin ob de gall. Bery likely she's de Dey's forty-second wife by dis time. Hush! look sulky," he added quickly, observing that his master was looking back.

Poor Foster found himself under the necessity of following his black friend's lead, and acting the "hyperkrite," in order to prevent their friendship being discovered. He did it with a bad grace, it is true, but felt that, for his friend's sake if not his own, he was bound to comply. So he put on an expression which his cheery face had not known since that period of infancy when his frequent demands for sugar were not gratified. Wheels worked within wheels, however, for he felt so disgusted with the part he had to play that he got into the sulks naturally!

"Fuss rate!" whispered Peter, "you's a most as good as myself."

By this time they had reached one of the eastern gates of the city. It was named Bab-Azoun. As they passed through it the negro told his brother-

slave that the large iron hooks which ornamented the wall there were used for the purpose of having criminals cast on them; the wretched victims being left to hang there, by whatever parts of their bodies chanced to catch on the hooks, till they died.

Having reached the open country outside the walls, they walked along a beautiful road, from which were obtained here and there splendid views of the surrounding country. On one side lay the blue Mediterranean, with its pic-

turesque boats and shipping, and the white city descending to the very edge of the sea; on the other side rose the wooded slopes of a suburb named Mustapha, with numerous white Moorish houses in the midst of luxuriant gardens, where palms, bananas, cypresses, aloes, lemon-trees, and orange groves perfumed the balmy air, and afforded grateful shade from the glare of the African sun.

Into one of those gardens the Moor at last turned and led the way to a house,

which, if not in itself beautiful according to European notions of architecture, was at least rendered cheerful with whitewash, and stood in the midst of a beauty and luxuriance of vegetation that could not be surpassed.

Opening a door in this building, the Turk entered. His slaves followed, and Foster, to his surprise, found what may be styled a miniature garden in the courtyard within.

(To be continued.)

EDRIC THE NORSEMAN:

A TALE OF DISCOVERY AND HEROISM.

By J. F. HODGETTS,

Late Professor and Crown Examiner at Moscow, Author of "Harold, the Boy-Earl," "Ivan Dobroff," "Kormak the Viking," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVII.—ON BOARD IN HARBOUR.

THE ravages of the vikings at the end of the ninth century had induced Harald Hårfagnar to make a law in Norway suppressing piracy. This law, however, was connected with so much tyranny, that many of his subjects fled to Iceland, and there founded the colony of which we have been speaking. Subsequent kings of Norway took this island under their protection, but it remained an independent republic after the death of Olaf Tryggvason, who, although he had been a bold pirate in his youth, became a vigorous opponent of the vikings, and encouraged commerce, to which their depredations had been a serious check.

Under the direction of this sovereign, certain viking chiefs bound themselves together into a sort of guild, to protect the defenceless merchants, to carry on trade themselves, to attack without mercy the other vikings who lived by piracy, and to share among themselves the booty which these sea-rovers had taken from peaceful merchants.

In consequence of this arrangement our friends Thorfinn and others, who had been concerned in the expeditions to Vineland, had been able to engage the services of a renowned sea-rover, called Hjalmar (pronounced Yalmar), to assist in the convoy of their ships to Norway, and to the knowledge that this formidable warrior had lent his sword for their protection, it was probably owing that the cargoes of the Sleipner and Rolf-Kraké came to their journey's end in safety, though later than they wished.

Drondhjem (or Trondhjem as it is sometimes written) was at the time we write of the capital of Norway; it means the home of kings, from Drott or Drotten, a king, and Hjem, a home. The name is pronounced as if written Tronyem. It is nearly in the same latitude as Hecla.

Trondhjem was a very different place from Reykiavik, and since Edric had seen it a few years ago it had much improved. For commerce had begun to flourish under the fostering hand of Olaf Tryggvason. Foreign merchants thronged the port, bringing with them

curious wares from Bremen, Paris, and even from York and London, though the decline in value of English goods had been for some years more and more remarkable.

Having passed the heads or "Nesses" that guarded the Bay of Trondhjem, the ships were not long in casting anchor near the town, and soon our friends were on land. Thorfinn paid the Viking Hjalmar (Yalmar) the stipulated sum and something over. Champions of Olaf's court were there to lead the warrior merchants to the king.

The greeting between Thorfinn and the King of Norway was very warm. Olaf was kind and hearty in his manner to all except Edric, whom he barely noticed, but to all the rest this man of power was friendliness itself. Now as our hero had already been received by Olaf, and well received, not very long ago, he was quite powerless to understand this change in manner. Thorfinn and the rest were asked to take the noonday meal with Olaf, but Edric was passed over in the invitation.

Pained and annoyed, he left the hall and stalked with rapid strides down to the landing-stage for boats, and jumping into one belonging to their fleet he pulled himself on board the Rolf-Kraké, and springing up the side was soon in conference with Njörd, who had been sent to Reykiavik by Eirik just before the squadron sailed.

He was no puppy now, but quite as much a full-grown member of the crew as any man on board. His memory seems to have been prodigious, for he knew Edric the moment that they met, attached himself to him, and now appeared to be the only one on board to whom our hero could confide his feelings.

We do not write for such dull boys as cannot understand how Njörd received this confidence nor how the youth was comforted by his four-footed friend. Many of our readers may possess Newfoundland dogs, but Njörd was absolutely the first one of the kind that ever had been brought to Europe, and was indeed a wonder.

We have omitted mention of the

bustle and excitement on the shore when the news spread that cargoes of strange things from unknown western lands had come in these two ships. A guard was stationed all along that portion of the bay near which the Rolf-Kraké and the Sleipner lay at anchor, to prevent inquisitive or thievish persons from taking portions of this treasure while the true owners were in Olaf's hall making merry after the Norwegian custom. Besides these guards on land, two warriors were left on board each ship, fully equipped and armed with battle-axes to keep off any stranger who might essay to board.

Of course our hero, as a member of the crew, boarded at once without the slightest question being asked, and then the warrior who received him, perceiving Thorfinn's wish would be completely carried out if Edric took his place, said to him: "I shall go on shore if thou abidest in my stead." To which our hero had replied: "Go, Oleg, and if my friend and foster-brother Nils should cross thy path, tell him I want him here on board."

"Yes, I will tell him, but remember Olaf gave orders that after nightfall none should leave the shore, not even members of our crews, so that I know they would not let them pass even as a well-known champion of the fleet. Take thou my battle-axe and watch till Anders Anders-son awakes and so relieves thee of thy guard."

"Go thou in peace, friend Oleg. I am not inclined for sleep; I will but have some counsel of my dog."

"Ha! ha! a wise and sober counselor. He will not tell thee any lies, will not betray thee, and, more than all, will never say a word in thy reproof. A courteous counselor, discreet and merry too. Ha! ha!"

And the huge soldier-sailor climbed down to the boat and rowed away to land. His comrade Anders Anderson roused by the splashing of the oars, got up, and, looking over, saw the departing boat.

"Well, by my blade! that is the coolest thing I ever heard of. Leave me alone on board without relief!"

"Not quite, friend Anders," Edric said. "I have returned on board and have relieved our comrade. Sleep, thou; my turn it is to watch."

"I am not sleepy, Edric Sigvaldson; talk thou thy fill with Njörd. I shall go forward and look out. For, though the shore is guarded, there are many ships about, and maybe some of them are more like viking craft than simple merchant vessels, so I shall watch, and call thee when I grow a little drowsy."

The champion now stalked forwards with a clanking stride enough to stave the very timbers in. Then he looked

A boat shot forth from what was called the "Bryg," meaning the bridge, or rather landing-stage, by which men either came on land from ships or boats, or entered them from shore. This boat pushed off just as the guards had orders to let no person pass, but the man who seemed her owner was furnished with a pass word which satisfied the men that he might pass with safety.

Has he mistaken? Does he want the Rolf-Kraké, or does he seek the unknown ship to which we have referred? He does not row, for the tide drifts him on close to the Rolf-Kraké's side. A

master. Throwing down his axe, he rushed to where the struggle had just taken place, and saw the dog holding a man up by his tunic in the water.

The twilight just permitted him to see that to the boat's rope hanging from the side a painter was attached by which a boat was fastened. So he hauled upon the line until the boat was near enough for Edric and his dog to seize and enter it. Edric jumped in while Njörd swam close with the intruder safely grasped between his teeth, for they had passed not only through the tunic but through the intruder's flesh!



"A short low growl, and the dog is on him."



steadily ahead among the other ships and—fell asleep.

Edric felt better for his talk with Njörd, and after a time sat down beside him, to the dog's intense delight, and whether it was sheer fatigue or the peculiar soothing lulling sound the wavelets made plashing against the side, we cannot tell, but he too fell asleep!

A smaller ship was moored a cable's-length ahead of Thorfinn's vessel. She had not long arrived, but she had been observed by Oleg and by Anders. Her crew was small; she was not smart in any sense, but looked, as seamen phrase it, "lubberly." However, these two warriors had other things to think of, and did not give themselves much trouble concerning this strange craft, seeing they were themselves in what had almost become a foreign port to them.

rope is towing aft, to which the boats from shore may bend their painters. This rope is fixed to what is called the gangway nowadays, and he within the boat secures his little vessel, and then climbs cat-like up the side.

What has he in his mouth, holding between his teeth? A dagger! He is on board. The dagger in his hand gleams as he raises it to strike the sleeping Edric, when, with a bound, a monster seems to start in fury from the sleeper's side! A short low growl, and the brave dog is on the would-be murderer! He tries to save himself, and topples over plump into the waves. The boat when he ascended had been carried by the tide to the extent allowed by rope and painter when bent together into one.

Down he fell—splash! Anders awoke to see the huge black dog jump overboard followed by his amphibious

Edric now pulled the unexpected visitor on board. Njörd followed so clumsily that he upset the little craft by his absurd behaviour.

"Throw down another rope there, Anders."

The sturdy champion lowered a rope, the end of which Edric passed round the body of his prisoner, and told the warrior on board to "haul away!"

With more rapidity than convenience, the man was hauled on board, and then, with much more trouble, the dog was hoisted up. Lastly, our hero climbed the rope, hand over hand, until he stood on deck. When fairly once again on board, he found his unknown enemy lying on his face, Njörd holding him down firmly with his paw. Anders looked grave.

"A rascally attempt!" said Edric. "I cannot make it out. Olaf was sulky as

a wounded bear, and now this scoundrel is sent to take my life! Who is he, Anders?"

"Look, if thou wilt be certain. Let go there, Njörd, a minute, there's a good dog!"

But Njörd was not inclined to yield his prisoner, even to Anders Anders-son the Big. He growled and held his paw upon the prisoner's neck, much as a kitten keeps a mouse within her reach in what may be described as a "kill-him-when-I-want-him" sort of way.

"Now let him go, Njörd," said Edric. "Let him go; I want him. Hand him over."

Reluctantly the dog obeyed. When Edric saw the face, he cried, "It is not possible! Thou here, Ulf Eirikson? What! wouldst thou take my life? Nay, this is base, indeed. I wish it had been some one else, though," he added, almost comically, "for what am I to do with him?"

"Just let me split his skull. Here is my battle-axe," replied the man called Anders the son of Anders. "I'll warrant he would never talk about the blow!"

"Nay, Anders, that will never do. He is my father's brother, and surely part of that respect which I should show my father belongs to Ulf, although unworthy of it."

"Well, then," said Anders, "let us put him in his boat again and let him row away."

"Yes, thou art right. Ulf Eirikson, canst thou descend the rope into thy boat? or shall I help thee down?"

"Cur that thou art thyself, keep that twin cub from me, and I will show thee how to use a rope."

Saying these words, Ulf Eirikson seized in both his hands the rope which we have mentioned as being fastened to the vessel's side, and in the manner most approved by sailors descended to his boat, cast off the painter, and commenced to row as for the very life.

"Pity that such a rogue," said Anders Anders-son, "should be so smart as *that*. I shame me almost for my seaman's habits if they are shared by such as he! He went down like a sailor every inch—and yet he's every inch a rascal!"

Njörd said the same no doubt, only he barked so loud, so long and furiously, that he meant more than Anders could express. He, Njörd, had been defrauded of his prey. He had exposed a villain, and they had let him go! Oh, it was past all bearing. Bow, *wow*, *wow*!

Anders and Edric watched the boat and saw her make right for the stranger vessel which had already served both him and Oleg as food for some reflection. After a moment's pause, Edric exclaimed,

"Promise me one thing, Anders."

"What is it, Edric?"

"Never to mention this abominable thing to any living being. He is my uncle, and *my* lips are closed."

"Just so, but mine are not. No, Edric, I can promise anything *in reason*, but I have been baptized. I am a Christian, and know that murder is a deadly sin. Now that *was* murder. Whether he were brother to thy father or to St. Peter I should denounce him if I should be called upon. I cannot promise thee to hold my peace about such rank rascality as that!"

"But Christianity requires forgiveness of our enemies."

"Well, I forgive my enemies, the English; but such a cur as that! Pah! And besides, *he is no enemy of mine*, and I have not been taught that I must straight forgive the foes of *other men* because I am Christian! No, my good lad. Thou *must* forgive him, that I see quite clearly, because he is thy enemy, but for that very cause *I* never will forgive him because he's *thine*."

Edric was not sufficiently well versed in Christian doctrine to meet this specious sophistry. He knew it was not right, but yet could not refute the other's words.

Next day the boats came off with Thorfinn and the rest to get to work upon the cargoes and sell them to the best advantage.

As Thorfinn gained the deck he said to Edric, "What hast thou done to Olaf Tryggvason? He who is usually kind and open-hearted is close and strange directly when we speak of thee. Who can have spoken of thee to him in dispraise of thee? Ha! Thou changest colour, boy. Tell me what is it thou hast done, for surely something must have happened when thou wast here before to vex him. I like it not. He is a just, good man."

"I have done nothing to offend King Olaf. He is mistaken if he thinks I have. All things come square in time, and if thou wilt believe me on my word, then thou canst rest assured I never have offended him."

"Strange, passing strange!" said Thorfinn, half aloud. "I half believe the boy, and yet—"

"Nay, Thorfinn, say no more. If thou but half believest me, then have I lived in vain. For years we have been thrown together, so thou couldst know my every action and know its deepest motive. If thou hast had no opportunity to know me in all these years I've sailed with thee, then is time useless, and the opinion of another, formed in some three months' slight acquaintance, is to be weighed against thy thorough knowledge of my very life."

"Thou speakest well, and it shall be seen to. Thou art a warrior of my train, a comrade on so many voyages, that I should have resented Olaf's manner as an insult to myself. No, by the saints, I like it not. I will demand the reason of the slight he put upon thee before the whole assembly of his nobles."

"Much better let it be, Thorfinn Karlsefni! If he dislikes me, let him! I have won the love of better men than he."

"Who is a better man than I?" exclaimed a man of rather odd appearance, not very tall or stout, but singularly active. His hair was long and yellow, with here and there a golden gleam that made it very lovely. He wore a cap of blue, bound with a rich gold band or ring, his arms were unadorned with those rich bracelets which formed the pride of Northern pagan chiefs—but then he was a Christian. He had arrived on board amidst the bustle, and had not been observed either by Thorfinn or by Edric, who both were standing forward of the gangway, and so he heard their words.

"Who is a better man than I am? Tell me that!"

"I knew not thou wert there, King Olaf, but I will tell thee whom I mean—Gissur and Yalti, who have done so much to turn the world to Christianity."

"Have I done nothing to that end?"

"Thou with the sword hast tried to force the faith of peace, they with their Christian love drew souls to heaven."

"By all the saints, but there is something in it! Art thou a Christian?"

"I am more thankful that I can say yes to that than for all other blessings I possess, and they are many!"

"Thou art an honest fellow! I much disliked the tales I heard against thee, and shame me to have listened to the trash. However, this is not the place or time to talk of matters such as these. Now we must see thy wares, thy precious woods thy—Ha! What is that?" And the brave King who had made the English tremble at his name, started in sheer alarm at seeing a Newfoundland dog come from beneath a heap of canvas, and put his two forepaws on Edric's shoulders. He drew his sword half way out of the scabbard, then seeing that the warriors round them only laughed and Edric fondled the unwieldy animal, he gathered courage, returned his sword, and gazed in wonder.

"Down, Njörd; down, sir, dost thou not see the King?"

"Bow, wow, *wow*!"

"It is a dog!" said Olaf Tryggvason.

"Where didst thou find him, Thorfinn?"

"He is not mine, King Olaf," answered Thorfinn, "he is the pet and property of Edric, who brought him from the Stoneland district before we get to Vineland."

After much wonder and surprise, the King surveyed the various articles which had been brought from Vineland in the west, and saw them lowered to the boats and carried safe ashore. But all his heart was fixed upon the dog, who treated him with comical familiarity—putting his paws upon his shoulders, licking his face, and showing good intent but scant respect. But as they rowed to land, Edric, being by the King's own special wish included in the party in his boat, made Njörd jump overboard to fetch a stick. Then the King's delight was boundless at the motions of the noble creature in the water.

"What is his price, friend Edric?"

"He is not mine to sell."

"How so? Thorfinn just told me that he was thy pet, brought hither by thee from the west, and taught by thee from puppydom till now!"

"All that is true, but yet he is not mine."

"To whom does he belong?"

"To my grandfather, King."

"Who is thy grandfather?"

"Hast thou forgotten Eirik, called the Red?"

"Ah yes, the pagan warrior of Greenland. The father to Ulf, I think?"

"He is, King Olaf."

"We shall speak more of this tomorrow. Jump ashore!"

(To be continued.)

THE SIGHTS OF OUR GREAT CITIES.

LONDON MUSEUMS.—II.

LET us get back to the west, to South Kensington. This time we will devote our attention to the prominent building in Cromwell Road we have hitherto passed by. This is the Natural History Museum, or rather the Natural History Branch of the British Museum. It can be visited any day between ten and four, and in summer till six o'clock; and it is free to all. Outside and inside it is a striking building, wonderfully light and spacious, and crowded with objects of interest. But there is too much in it to be seen properly in a day, and its hard floors soon tell their tale. It is a mistake to stop in a museum when you are tired. Come away, or you will begin to hate it. There is a vast difference between the effect here and in the dreary old galleries of the British; but do not invite a "headache à la Bloomsbury" by attempting the impossible.

We enter at once the Central Hall, the Index Museum. In the foreground is a case of pigeons, showing all the different fancy varieties in their various developments from the wild bird. To pigeon fanciers this case alone is worth a journey to see. Behind it is the skeleton of a whale that came ashore at Thurso in 1863. The skeleton is fifty feet long, and is complete all but three of the vertebrae at the end of the tail. The principal parts are all labelled, so that you can see at a glance under what strange modifications the mammalian plan is adhered to. Look at the flipper, and see how the bones in it answer to the shoulder, elbow, wrist, and fingers of your own hand and arm! The hind limbs are absent, but the two suspended bones represent the hip bones. In some whales there are even traces of the thigh, knee-joint, and leg attached to these bones, and like them buried in the animal's body. The whale is placed here because there is not room for it in the Cetacea Gallery downstairs, where you will find, among other examples of the huge, a Rorqual, sixty-eight feet long. The staircase to the Cetacea room leads out of the end of the Coral Gallery, of which more anon.

To learn all that this Central Hall can teach you would take a day at the least. Nothing exactly like it is in any existing museum. There are five bays on each side, and they will be filled with what is called an introductory collection. Take the first bay on the left, devoted to the mammals, and read it as you would a book, beginning at the left-hand top corner. There is a skeleton of a man, with the names of all the bones clearly printed on them. Then there is a bat, representing the flying mammals, with the forelimbs converted into wings by the great elongation of the fingers, which support the web of skin. Then there is a sloth, in which the limbs, all duly labelled, are reduced to the hooks by which it hangs from the trees. Then there is a baboon, where the whole of the palms of the hands and soles of the feet are used for walking. Then there is an antelope, representing a running animal; and then a porpoise, representing a swimming mammal. The same series of bones are in each, but see how they are modified. You will learn more in five minutes than an ordinary text-book will teach you in a week. Follow on with these modifications. See how the five-fingered hand changes into the single-fingered paw of the horse, or into the double-fingered paw of the cow, still erroneously spoken of as a cloven hoof. In the centre case you have the modifications of the teeth in a beautifully prepared set of

examples from fish-eaters, flesh-eaters, insect-eaters, grass-eaters, etc.

Take the second bay, and see how the skin is modified into plates, and scales, and hair, and horns, and hoofs. Or take the third bay, devoted to the birds, which may be of more interest to you. Here is a skeleton of a bird in all its parts, with every individual feather of the wing and tail named and shown in all stages of development. Look at the series showing the growth and mechanism of a feather; see the sections of bones and beaks, all beautifully clear, all named in all their details. As it is with the birds so it will soon be with the reptiles and fish, all of them shown, taken to pieces, and yet so admirably arranged as to permit of no error in seeing how they fit. On the other side of the hall you will find typical groups of the invertebrates similarly treated. Study the butterfly and the beetle from this point of view, and understand your cabinets better. The series of insect wings will delight you. If you are interested in flowers follow on to the last three bays. Half an hour in them will save you from all further confusion as to vegetable structure.

Through the doors at the end of this hall you will find a real British museum, a museum containing stuffed and preserved specimens of every animal found in these islands; and nothing else. Here are all the Britishers—mammals, birds, fish, molluscs, insects—in all their varieties. And what a collection it is! Open your eyes, and see how rich is your country in animal life. If you have a collection of shells, bring them here, compare them with those in the cases, and name them. If you have found some strange object at the seaside, bring it here and find out what it is. If you have seen a bird in your wanderings, come here and identify him. If you have caught a strange beetle, bring it here. To come here with a view of seeing all the beetles, all the birds, or all the shells, is to court collapse, but come and study one thing and you will profit much.

But now let us launch out into the world. On the left-hand side of the entrance from the street is the Bird Gallery, one long room with many bays stretching half the length of the building. Here are thousands of birds from all parts of the globe, from the mighty condor of the Andes to the tiniest humming-bird. At the end is the solemn kiwi keeping an eye on all, and close by are the skeletons of the extinct dodo and solitaire. And not far off is the now extinct great auk from the Arctic Seas, and the large emperor penguin from the Antarctic Ocean, the only specimens of which were obtained by the Ross Expedition in 1839. The series of birds of prey, from the sea eagle to the dwarf falcon, no bigger than a sparrow, is the finest in Europe, though the ostriches and emus and the sea birds are more striking to the majority.

But the attraction of the gallery is the series of groups in glass cases showing the birds at home. In one case there is a pair of kestrels in their home among the rocks, with their nest and little ones. In another is the nest of the kingfisher on the river bank, with the birds looking as natural as if they were alive. Among other striking tableaux are those of the sand-martin, in a case that requires looking at on all sides, the Arctic tern and the Manx shearwater; but there are dozens of them, and on the staircase landing the series is continued. No lover of birds should miss this collection. Its value con-

sists in its absolute truthfulness. The surroundings are not chosen by chance or imagination. In every case we have a carefully executed reproduction of what was present round the particular nest. Wherever possible, the original rocks, trees, or grass have been preserved; and, where these were of a perishable nature, they have been accurately modelled from nature. The natural form and characteristic attitude of the birds have been studied and caught, and the result is an unrivalled series of pleasant object-lessons. The idea was doubtless taken from the private museum in the Dyke Road at Brighton, but here it is more fully developed. After seeing these cases you will be apt to look critically at the regiments of stuffed birds on stands that crowd the shelves around in such profusion.

Parallel to the Bird Gallery runs the narrow Coral Gallery, full of beautiful corals and sponges, and their allies, noticeable among them being the Glass Rope Sponge, Neptune's Goblet, and Venus's Flower Basket. Off the Coral Gallery lead other galleries, each a museum in itself. Nearest the Central Hall are the fishes of the world, and formidable enough some of them look, especially the sawfish and sharks. The next gallery is that devoted to the insects, which does not make much of a show, owing to the American cloth screens to the cases which protect the colours of the objects from fading, and which must be removed if you wish to see anything. Next we enter the Reptile Gallery, with crocodiles and alligators sprawling in its centre, and tortoises and turtles of colossal size at its side; and unpleasant-looking snakes at the end, chief among which are the big anaconda, the biggest of snakes, and the hamadryad or ophiophagus—the snake-eating snake, the largest of poisonous snakes. Alongside the Reptile Gallery is the Starfish Gallery, with some beautiful specimens; and next to it is the large Shell Gallery, with its argonauts and pearly nautilus, and cuttles and cones, and univalves and bivalves in thousands, from the microscopic up to the Giant Clam on which Venus rose from the sea.

If you have not yet seen enough, let us mount the stairs to the gallery over the birds. On the stairs we pass the grand Darwin statue, and then, on the next flight, make our way among the rest of the nesting groups of birds. Entering the Mammalia Gallery, we begin with the gorillas and chimpanzees, and work along to the giraffes and buffaloes, and then back again. It is a splendid collection, but, somehow, all the specimens ought to be on the floor. To stick up a lion or tiger on a shelf in a cupboard seems to be treating him with too much familiarity. The wild sheep and cattle, the deer and antelopes, and the marsupials are well represented, and the centre line of uncased specimens is a singularly striking display. Upstairs, in the gallery above, we can see how mammals look "when they take off their flesh and sit in their bones." Here is a bold show of osteology: skeletons of every group, from man downwards, with especially large series of elephants and wild cattle, while on the top of the cases is a fine collection of the horns of oxen, buffaloes, antelopes, and sheep.

Facing the Bone Gallery is the Botanical Department and Herbarium. In the Herbarium, which is open only to students, is the collection of plants made during Captain Cook's voyage round the world, and also John Ray's European collection made

in 1663. In the Public Gallery are the representatives of the usual orders, with dried specimens, coloured drawings, fruits, and wood sections.

Below the Botany and opposite the Mammalia Gallery is the Mineral Department. It possesses the richest collection known; in fact its wealth is overpowering unless you attack systematically. Do not rush at the gold as soon as you enter, and then wander aimlessly about, as most people do, till they are tired. Go straight down the gallery to the end, look at the meteorites—one of them, the Cranbourne specimen, weighs three and a half tons—notice the splendid crystal of selenite close to it, and the specimen of stibnite opposite, and try the double refraction of the great mass of calcite, inspect the Ruskin case, and then make your way back from the pavilion, looking at such of the cases as take your fancy. That is one way of seeing the minerals. But if you have time and wish to learn something, buy the threepenny "Introduction to the Study of Minerals," at the table inside the door, and with it in your hand, go to the case under the first window on your left. With the aid of

this little book—one of the clearest and compactest of the mineralogies—and the specimens in the case, you will soon know enough to understand what you are to look for in the specimens around. Even without the guide, the descriptions on the typical examples are so clear as to smooth the way materially for the student, although to know a mineral you should handle it. To read about it in a text-book, without seeing it, is little better than waste of time.

Below the minerals, on the ground floor, is the Geological Gallery, devoted to Palæontology, or the zoology of the past. Down the centre is a striking array of extinct monsters, noticeable amongst them being the mastodon, the great mammoth skull found in Ilford brickfield, the megaceros, and, in the pavilion, the megatherium and the carapace of the glyptodon, which is almost as big as a hansom cab. The main gallery is devoted to fossil mammals, the pavilion to fossil edentates, marsupials, and birds. Parallel to it runs the Fossil Reptile Gallery, with its huge saurians. Leading off from this, in the order as they come, are special collections, like the original collection of William Smith, or the crag representatives

brought together by Mr. Searles Wood; then plants, corals, and sponges; then echinoderms and molluscs; then cephalopods; then fishes. In the centre of these galleries some very striking examples are shown. Let those who "do not believe in fossils" look at the lump from the Portland roachbed, or the piece of Bembridge limestone, or the trunk of the opalised tree, and see for themselves "how the rocks are built." The number of specimens is so vast that the youthful student is likely to give up in despair the attempt to look over them one by one; and he would be wise to do so. For beginners in the science a special stratigraphical collection is being arranged; those more advanced should attack the different galleries on different days. As we said before, any endeavour to "do" the Natural History Museum in one day will assuredly end in headache and despondency; but treat it with the consideration it deserves, and you will grow proud of it and appreciate it, and be grateful for the never-ending chances it gives you for genuine work and intelligent amusement.

(To be continued.)

THE MASTER OF THE SHELL:

A PUBLIC SCHOOL STORY.

BY TALBOT BAINES REED,

Author of "A Dog with a Bad Name," "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's," etc., etc.

CHAPTER IX.—THE SESSION OF MASTERS AND AN OUTRAGE.

IT is to be feared that Mark Railsford, Moral Science man though he was, had yet to learn the art of applying his philosophy to his own circumstances, or he would never have committed the serious error, on the day following the event recorded in the last chapter, of writing the following foolish note to Mr. Bickers:

Feb. 1.

Sir,—Referring to the unpleasant topic of our conversation last night, I have since consulted my prefects on the matter, and made other inquiries as to what took place here during my temporary absence at the athletic meeting. The report I have received, and which I am disposed to credit, differs materially from your own version. In any case, allow me to say that I require no assistance in the management of my house. When I do, I shall ask for it. Meanwhile I shall continue to consider the interference of any one, whatever his motives, as an impertinence which I, although the junior master at Grandcourt, shall have no hesitation in resenting to the utmost of my power. I trust these few lines may obviate any future misunderstanding on a point about which I feel very strongly.

Yours, etc.,

M. RAILSFORD.

Mr. Bickers was hardly the man to neglect the opportunity afforded by this letter for a crushing reply; and accordingly he spent a pleasant hour that same afternoon in concocting the following polite rejoinder:

Feb. 1.

DEAR RAILSFORD,—Many thanks for your note just to hand. I can quite believe that the version of yesterday's proceedings which you are disposed to credit, given by your prefects (two of whom were absent

and the other two participants in the disturbance), differs materially from my own. Such diversities of opinion are not uncommon in my experience. As to the management of your house, I assure you in what I did yesterday I had no intention of assisting you. In fact you were not there to assist. It was because you were not, that my duty to the school suggested that I should attempt to do what you would have done infinitely better, I am aware, had you been on the spot. Under similar circumstances I should do the same again, in face of the uncomfortable knowledge that thereby I should be guilty of an impertinence to the junior master at Grandcourt. It is kind of you to take steps to make your meaning quite clear on this matter. May I suggest that we refer the matter to the session of masters, or, if you prefer it, to Dr. Ponsford? I believe the masters meet to-night. Unless I hear from you, I shall conclude you are as anxious as I am to have the matter thoroughly gone into by a competent tribunal, to obviate any future misunderstanding on a point on which you naturally feel strongly. Believe me, my dear Railsford, Yours, very truly,

T. BICKERS.

Artistically speaking, Mr. Bickers might have made his letter a good deal more effective by introducing into it a little less venom; but Railsford, as he read it, was not in a mood for calm criticism. He felt he had made a big mistake, and put himself into the hands of the very man against whom he desired to assert himself.

What is the use of moral science if it cannot keep a man from making a fool of himself like this? Unless Railsford did something to prevent it, the business would now go before the session of masters, and he could only prevent it

by eating humble pie to Mr. Bickers. It was not a pleasant corner to be in.

Mark was entertaining company when this uncomfortable letter arrived, in the person of M. Lablache, the French master.

It would be difficult to say what there was in the unpopular foreigner which attracted the Master of the Shell. It may have been a touch of Quixotic chivalry which led him to defy all the traditions of the place and offer his friendship to the best-hated person in Grandcourt; or it may have been a feeling that Monsieur was hardly judged by his colleagues and pupils. However it was, during the short time the term had run, the two men had struck up an acquaintance which perplexed a good many spectators and displeased a good many more.

"I think you should be careful with Lablache," said Grover to his friend. "Not that I know anything against him, but his reputation in the school is rather doubtful."

"I suppose the reputation of all detention masters is doubtful," said Railsford, laughing; "yours or mine would be if we had his work to do. But a man is innocent till he is proved guilty, in England, isn't he?"

"Quite so," said Grover. "I don't want to set you against him, for, as I say, I know nothing of him. All I mean is, that you must be prepared to share a little of his unpopularity if you take up with him. That's all."

"I'll take my chance of that," said Railsford.

The first time M. Lablache appeared in Railsford's house, in response to an invitation from the new master to come

and take coffee, there was considerable excitement in the house. The juniors considered their liberty was at stake, and hissed their master's guest down the corridors.

The Shell boys presumed still further, and raised a cry of "Turn him out!" and some even attempted to hustle him and trip him up on the stairs.

The prefects put their heads together, and thought it was "a drop too much" to make "Froggy" free of their house.

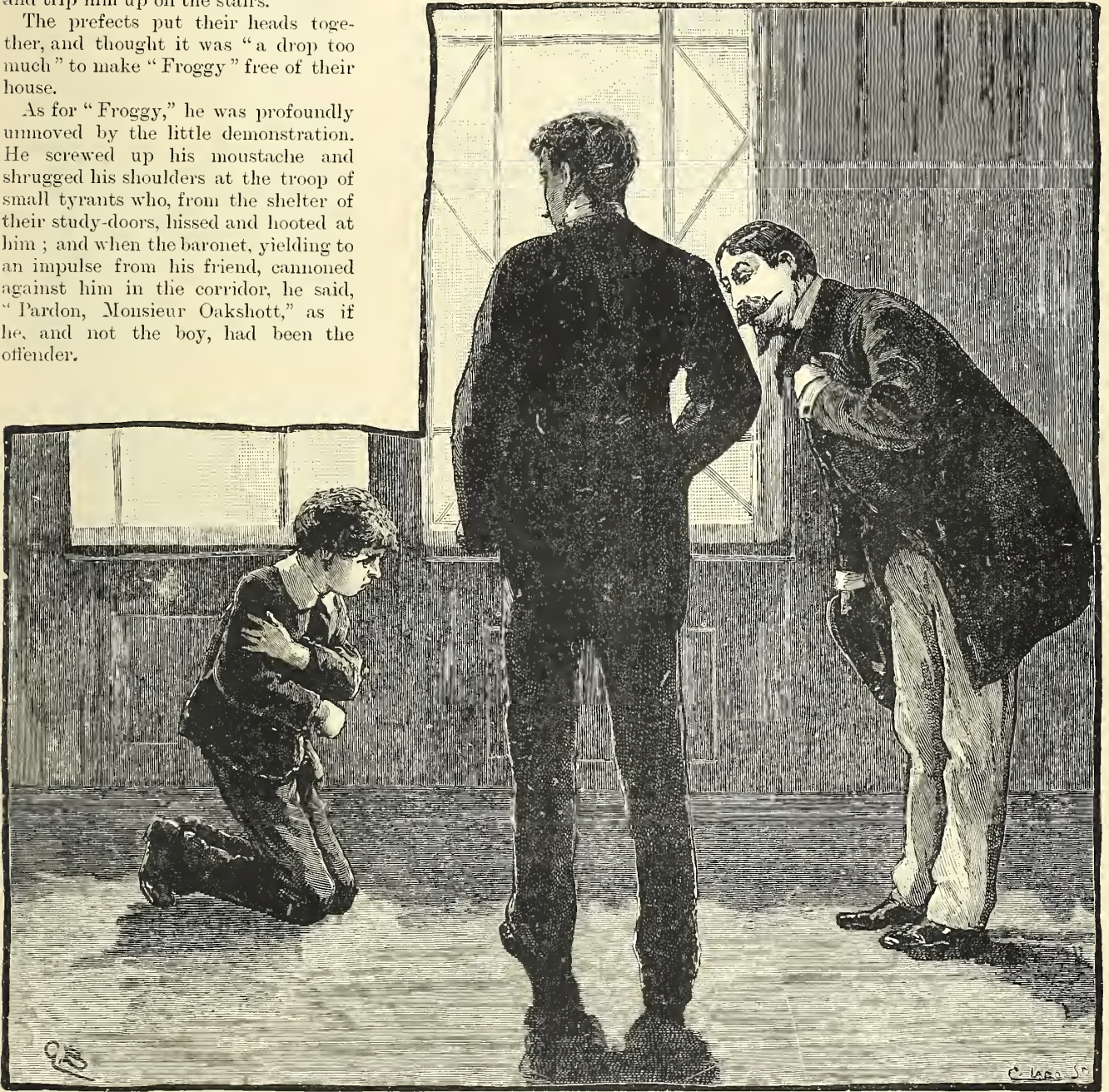
As for "Froggy," he was profoundly unmoved by the little demonstration. He screwed up his moustache and shrugged his shoulders at the troop of small tyrants who, from the shelter of their study-doors, hissed and hooted at him; and when the baronet, yielding to an impulse from his friend, cannoned against him in the corridor, he said, "Pardon, Monsieur Oakshott," as if he, and not the boy, had been the offender.

opened and Munger was sent reeling across the lobby under a blow which echoed through the house. The Master of the Shell, white with rage, stood there with a look on his face which sent the few loiterers packing to their dens, and made Munger only sorry the wall

with a shrug, when Mark checked him by a gesture almost as intimidating as that by which he had just summoned the offender.

"You hear me?" he said to the boy.

Munger went down on his knees and repeated whatever he was told; and



"Munger went down on his knees and repeated whatever he was told!"

But the most curious incident of that untriumphal progress was when Munger, the cad of the Fifth, confronted Monsieur in the lobby outside Railsford's room with the shout, "He's going to raise money on his old clothes at last!"

The brutal words (for Monsieur was very shabbily attired) were scarcely uttered when Railsford's door suddenly

against which he staggered did not open and let him through.

"Come here, you—you, boy!"

Munger advanced, scarcely less pale than his master.

"Apologise to Monsieur Lablache—here, down on your knees—for behaving like a blackguard, and saying what you did."

"No, it is no matter," began Monsieur,

would have called himself by still worse names, had he been requested. It didn't matter much to Munger!

"Now, tell me your name?"

"Munger."

"Your form?"

"Fifth."

The master turned on his heel and ushered his guest into the room, leaving Munger to rub his cheek, and won-

der to himself how he ever came to stand being knocked about in the way he had been that afternoon.

This had happened a day or two ago. Since then, whatever the house thought, no one was bold enough to molest the French master publicly in Railsford's, unless it was perfectly certain Mr. Railsford was out of the way.

It would be a mistake to say the two masters had become devoted friends. Monsieur Lablache's chief attraction in Railsford's eyes was that he was looked down upon by the other masters and persecuted by the boys; while the French master was so unused to notice of any kind, that he felt a trifle suspicious that the kindness of his new acquaintance might be in some way a snare. However, a little mutual mistrust sometimes paves the way to a good deal of mutual confidence; and after a few days, the two men had risen considerably in one another's esteem.

When Railsford, on the evening in question, crushed Mr. Bickers's note up in his hand, with an angry exclamation, Monsieur said,

"*Voilà, mon cher* Railsford, you do not get always *billets-dour*?"

Monsieur had heard, of course, as every one else had, of the new master's matrimonial prospects.

"No," said Railsford, gloomily, "not always," and he pitched Mr. Bickers's letter into the grate as he spoke.

"Perhaps," said Monsieur, "you do not always write them. I advise you to not answer that letter."

"Why?" said Railsford, "how do you know what that letter is?"

"I do not know; but I think that it does need no answer."

Railsford laughed. "You are setting up as a soothsayer, Monsieur. Suppose I tell you that letter does need an answer, quickly?"

"Then, I say, somebody else will answer it better than you will."

Railsford picked the crushed-up letter off the coals just in time to save it from the flames.

"How should you answer it, Monsieur?"

Monsieur slowly unfolded the paper and smoothed it out.

"Meester Beekaire!" said he, with a twist of his moustache, as he recognised the writing, "You mean that I read it?"

"Certainly, if you like."

The Frenchman read the document through, and then pitched it back into the fire.

"Well?" said Railsford.

"Well, my good friend, it seems you do not know Meester Beekaire as well as others."

"Is that all?" said Railsford, a little nettled.

"The masters' meeting is to-night, is it not?"

"So he says."

"You shall go?"

"Of course."

"It will not be pleasant times for you, for you will need to make speeches, my good friend."

"Look here," said Railsford, who was getting a little impatient of these enigmatical utterances, "I fancied you could give me some advice; if you can't, let

us talk about something more pleasant."

"I do give you advice. I say to you, go to the meeting, and say you did wrong, and will not do it again—"

"What!" thundered Mark, in a voice which made Arthur and the baronet in the room overhead jump out of their chairs.

"My kind Railsford, it is only my advice. You have been in the wrong. I say to you, as a brave man, do not make yourself more wrong. Meester Beekaire would help you very much to make yourself more wrong. Do not let him help you, I say."

Unpalatable as it was, there was some force in his visitor's advice, which Railsford was bound to admit. Poor Monsieur was not a shining example of successful dealing with his fellow-masters. Still, out of the mouth of the simple one may sometimes hear a home truth.

"What time is the meeting?" asked Mark.

"Half-past seven. I shall be there," said the Frenchman. "Nobody wants me, but I go. Why not? If I stay away when nobody wants me, *hélas!* my friend, I go nowhere!"

And Monsieur shrugged himself—which was his way of sighing.

Railsford walked across that evening to the masters' session (as it was grandiloquently called in the old-school traditions), calmly resolved to follow Monsieur's advice, and not to allow himself to be placed still further in the wrong by a purposeless rupture with Mr. Bickers. It was no light thing to bring his mind to this decision, but Mark Railsford was a brave man, whatever else he was.

The masters' session was a periodical conference of the Grandcourt masters, half social, half business, for the purpose of talking over matters of common school interest, discussing points of management, and generally exchanging ideas on what was passing in the little world of which they were the controllers. Dr. Ponsford rarely, if ever, put in an appearance on such occasions; he had the greatest faith in holding himself aloof from detail, and not making himself too accessible, either to master or boy. Only when the boys could not settle a matter for themselves, or the masters could not settle it for them, he interfered and settled it without argument and without appeal.

It was never pleasant when the Doctor had to be called in, and the feeling against such a step contributed very largely to the success of the school's self-government.

Railsford by this time knew most of his fellow-masters to speak to, but this was the first occasion on which he had met them in their corporate capacity, and had he not been personally interested in the proceedings he would have felt a pleasant curiosity in the deliberations of this august body.

Mr. Bickers was already there, and nodded in a most friendly way to the Master of the Shell on his arrival. Grover and Mr. Roe welcomed their new colleague warmly, and began at once to compare notes as to school work. A few minutes later M. Lablache, a little smarter than usual, came in,

and, having bowed to the company generally—a salute which no one seemed to observe—subsided on a retired seat. Railsford, to the regret perhaps of some of his friends, presently walked across and took a seat beside him, and the meeting began.

"Before we come to business," began Mr. Roe, who by virtue of his seniority occupied the chair, "I am sure the meeting would wish me to express their pleasure at seeing Mr. Railsford among us for the first time, and to offer him a hearty welcome to Grandcourt."

"Hear, hear," said Grover and others, amongst whom Mr. Bickers's voice was conspicuous.

Railsford felt uncomfortable thus to become an object of general notice, and coloured up as he nodded his acknowledgments to the chairman.

"They do not know of your scrape," said Monsieur, cheerfully. "I would tell them about it, my good friend, before Meester Beekaire makes his little speech."

Railsford glared round at his companion, and felt his heart thumping at the prospect of the task before him.

"There are one or two matters," began Mr. Roe, "to bring before—"

Railsford rose to his feet and said, "Mr. Roe and gentlemen—"

There was a dead silence at this unexpected interruption, broken only by an encouraging cheer from Mr. Bickers.

Supposing the new master was about to acknowledge the compliment just paid him by a set speech, Mr. Roe put down his agenda paper and said, "Mr. Railsford."

"If you will allow me," began Mark, rather breathlessly, "I would like to refer to a matter which personally concerns myself. I should not venture to do it in this way, immediately after your kind welcome, if I did not feel it to be my duty. Yesterday, gentlemen, an unfortunate incident occurred in my house—[*"Hear, hear,"* and a smile from Mr. Bickers]. I went—"

"Excuse me," said the chairman, "may I explain to Mr. Railsford, as he is a new member here, that our practice is invariably to take up any questions in order of the seniority of the masters present. Mr. Smith, I believe, has a motion on the paper—"

Poor Railsford subsided, full of confusion, stripped of his good resolutions, abusing himself for his folly, and wishing M. Lablache and his advice at the bottom of the sea.

What Mr. Smith and the other masters who followed had to say he neither heard nor cared. His determination to admit his own error had oozed away, and he resolved that if his story was to be kept waiting, it should be none the sweeter, when it did come, for the delay.

Several topics were discussed pleasantly, with a view to elicit the opinion of the meeting on small questions of policy and discipline.

Presently Mr. Roe turned to Bickers. "I think you said you had some question to ask, Mr. Bickers?"

"Oh, well, yes. Mine's quite a hypothetical point, though," began Mr. Bickers, airily. "I just wanted to ask, supposing one of us becomes aware of a riot in a neighbouring house, during

the absence of the master of that house, and ascertains, moreover, that the prefects on duty, so far from making any attempt to control the disorder, are participating in it, I presume there can be no question that it would be the duty of any one of us to interfere in such a case? It's quite a hypothetical case, mind, but it might occur."

"Certainly, I should say, if you were quite sure the proper house authorities were not there to enforce order," said Mr. Roe.

"Of course," said Grover: "but it's rather an unlikely case, isn't it?"

"It occurred in my house last night," broke in Railsford, hotly. "I was at the Athletic Union, and two of my prefects; the other two were left in charge. Mr. Bickers took upon himself to interfere in my absence, and I have written to tell him that I consider his action impertinent, and resent it. In reply, he writes—"

"A *private* letter," interposed Mr. Bickers, hurriedly, evidently not relishing the prospect of having his effusion read.

"It was not marked 'private,' but I can quite understand the writer would not like to hear it read aloud here. All I wish to say is that his hypothetical case is no more hypothetical than his interference was in the affairs of my house; and that if he asks my opinion on the matter, I shall tell him he would do better to mind his own business!"

Railsford sat down, very hot, and painfully conscious that he had not exhibited the moderation and temper which he had promised himself to observe.

An embarrassed silence ensued. Mr. Roe, a man of peace, frowned, and turned inquiringly to Bickers.

Bickers stroked his beard and smiled, and said nothing.

"Do you wish to say anything?" asked the chairman.

"By no means. Mr. Railsford has said all I could wish said far more eloquently than I could. Shall we go on to the next business, Mr. Chairman?"

"Perhaps," said Mr. Roe, "as there seems to be some feeling in the matter, it would be better not to continue it. Mr. Bickers and Mr. Railsford know how essential peace among ourselves is to the good of the school, and I feel sure that any misunderstanding which may exist will not be allowed to continue unnecessarily."

"And yet," began M. Lablache, unwisely, "Mr. Beekaire's letter—"

"The matter is at an end here, Monsieur," said the chairman, shortly.

The Frenchman relapsed into silence, screwing his moustache, and only half perceiving that he had done no good to anybody, least of all to his new friend, by his interference.

As for Railsford, the further proceedings had no interest for him, and he vanished the moment the meeting was over, without speaking to any one.

Mr. Bickers remained a few moments to reply to a question from Mr. Roe. He pooh-pooled the whole affair.

"Really it's not worth discussing, Roe," said he. "Our friend has a hot temper, and he will be all the better for this little explosion. I should not

have raised the question at all, only I wished to know what the masters generally considered was the proper thing to do. Of course, Railsford is young, or he would have known better than to desert his house at preparation time, taking with him his only two effective prefects, and leaving in charge a couple of palpably incompetent boys, who are as bad as the fellows they were supposed to look after. I was bound to interpose, or there would have been a regular scandal; and I suppose Railsford felt bound to object. It's only natural, and I don't complain. Depend upon it, it takes two to make a quarrel, Roe, and I have no intention of making the second. I don't think it will occur again."

"I trust not. Railsford is a good fellow, and I don't object to his spirit. Only there is a right and a wrong way of stroking one's neighbour, you know, Bickers. We cannot afford the luxury of civil war."

Mr. Bickers smiled pleasantly, and walked off towards his house. He really felt a little sorry for his fellow-master, who had let himself down by so paltry an exhibition of temper thus early in his career. However, no doubt he would take to heart to-night's lesson, and do himself more justice in future.

Mr. Bickers, in the fulness of his heart, took a little round of the big square on his way home, with the double intent of giving himself the air, and perchance intercepting, for the good of the school, one or more youthful night-birds in their truant excursions. This was a kind of sport in which Mr. Bickers was particularly successful, and which, therefore (as became a successful sportsman), he rather enjoyed. To his credit, he it said, he was strictly impartial in his dealings; whether the culprit belonged to his own house (as often happened) or to another's, he was equally down upon him, and was never known to relax his penalties for the most plausible excuse set up by his ingenious victims.

To-night it seemed as if he would return without a "bag" at all, and he was about to resign himself to his disappointment, when his quick eyes detected in the darkness a hovering shadow moving ahead of him in the direction of Railsford's house. It vanished almost immediately, but not before the master had caught a faintly-uttered "Hist!" which betrayed that he had to deal with more than one truant.

He quickened his pace a little, and came once more in view of the phantom slinking along by the wall at a pace which was not quite a run. Rather to Mr. Bickers's surprise the fugitive passed the door of Railsford's, and made straight on towards the chapel, slackening pace as he did so.

"A decoy," said the knowing master to himself. "Employed to draw me on while the rest make good their retreat. There is a touch of generosity in the decoy which one is bound to admire, but on this occasion, my young friend, you are dealing with rather too aged a bird to be caught—"

At this moment he had come up to the door of Railsford's, and before his soliloquy had been able to advance by

another word he seemed to see sparks before his eyes, while at the same moment his feet went from under him, and something was drawn over his head. The bag, or whatever it was, was capacious; for the neck of it descended to his waist, and closed by the magic of a slip-knot round his mouth and elbows before he had the presense of mind to shout or throw out his arms. To complete his misfortune, as he tried to raise himself, another noose was snugly cast around his feet, and thus gagged and pinioned, silently, rapidly, and dexterously, Mr. Bickers found himself in a situation in which, he could positively aver, he had never stood—or lain—before.

The thought did flash through his sack-enveloped head, that his assailants, whoever they were, must have rehearsed this little comedy carefully and diligently for a day or two, in order to arrive at the perfection displayed in the present performance. He also made a mental calculation that three, possibly four, fellow-beings were engaged on the job, of whom two were strong, and two were small; one of the latter possibly being the decoy whom he had so lately apostrophised.

Not a syllable was uttered during the ceremony; and the victim recognising his position, had the good sense to remain cool and not waste his time and dignity in a fruitless struggle.

The pinioning being complete, and a small hole being considerably opened in the sack in the region of the nose for purposes of respiration, he was hauled up one or two steps, dragged one or two feet, deposited on the board floor of the shoe-cupboard, and, after a few mild and irresolute kicks, left to his own meditations, the last sound which penetrated into the sack being the sharp turning of a key on the outside of his dungeon door.

"So," soliloquised Mr. Bickers, after discovering that he was unhurt, though uncomfortably cramped, "our friend Railsford is having one lodger more than the regulation number to-night. This will make another hypothetical case for the next session of masters!"

(To be continued.)



COLTISH CHRONICLES;

OR, THE BOY'S OWN PONY.

BY CUTHEBERT BRADLEY.

CHAPTER I.



DEAR ; oh, dear ! what shall I do ? Them audacious boys certainly mean getting killed ! Master George, if you don't leave

ral instinct for riding that fires the ambition of most boys, they were taking to it as naturally as a young duck does to the water.

The elder Master Pickle, on the butcher's old pony, was giving his younger brother, on the blacksmith's donkey, a lead over a sheep-trough. George and the pony got over the obstacle without parting company, but the blacksmith's donkey would not have the jump at any price, so Master Felix involuntarily went on alone, right into the trough.

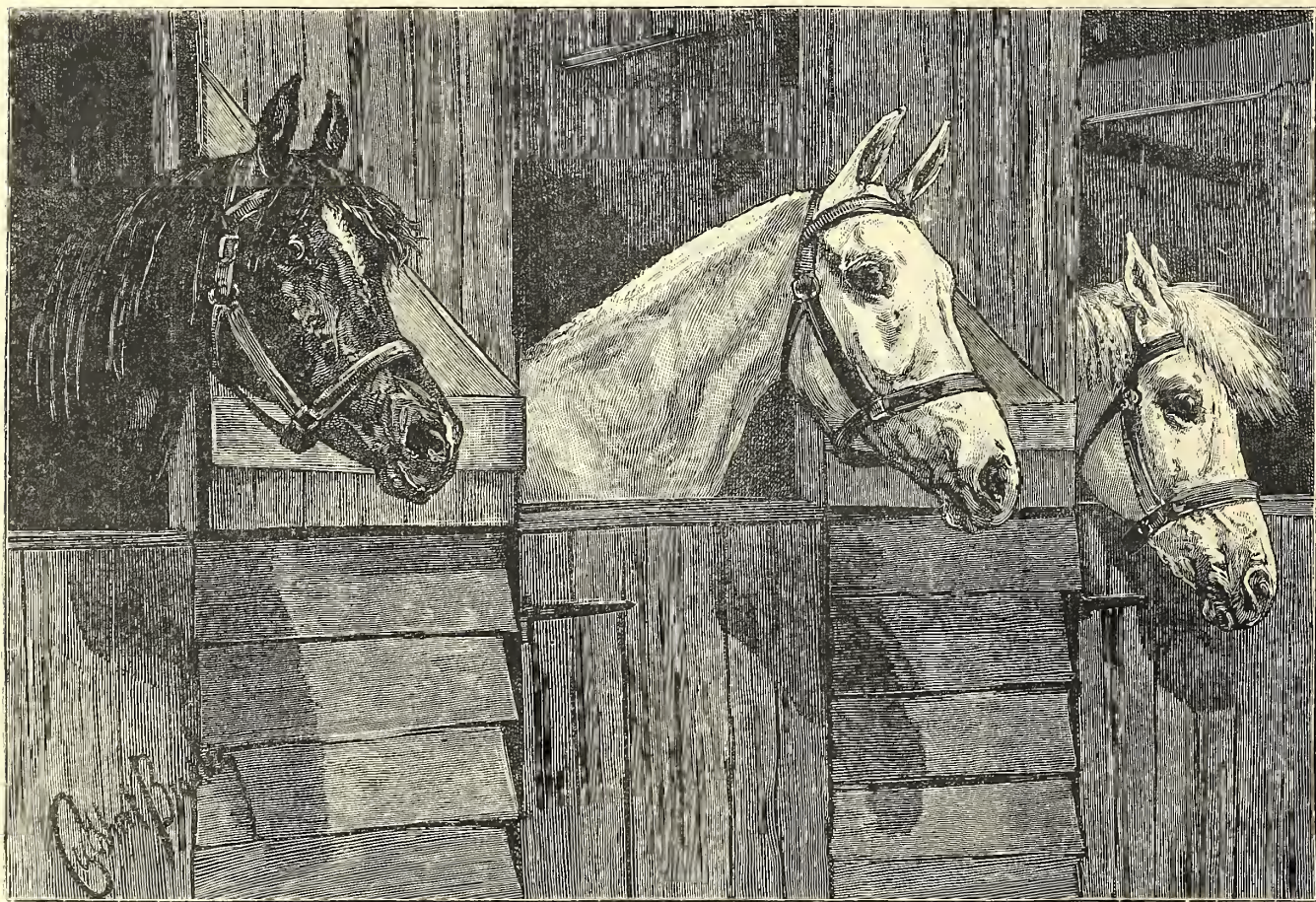
Up to the time of their ride over the sheep-troughs their most thrilling adventure had been on the backs of the piebald hobby-horses of a merry-go-round. Master George was the more daring horseman of the two ; he never left off twirling round and round until he felt sick. The merry-go-round man who lifted him off and took his money said "he was a plucky one, and would make a horseman some day."

passed by her young hopeful unnoticed had he not spoken.

"Hullo, mother ! I've given Jim, the ploughboy, a halfpenny to let me ride this horse home from plough, and I think he's well worth the money ; don't you ?"

There is something about a horse that fascinates boys. As soon as they are out of the cradle, by natural instinct they want to ride. The young idea takes form at first in the shape of toys. Who is there that has not started life by owning a miniature stud of Noah's-ark horses, hobby-horses, ride-a-cock horses, and the gallant grey rocking-horse ! Most boys have !

The horse figures all through the pages of English history. The climate has always suited him, and he has kept pace with the times, and progressed and improved with the advances of civilisation. We read of him at the time of Caesar's invasion, and there is abundant proof that the inhabitants



Some Ponies for Boys.

1. Arabian

2. Irish.

3. New Forest.

off I shall go and tell your mamma this minute !"

It was a case of the old hen and her brood of ducklings again, or, to speak plainly and not in parables, Master George and Master Felix had got loose from poor nurse's apron-strings. Following the natu-

No sooner had he recovered from the ill-effects than the growing tendency for equestrianism again developed itself, and he was met one day by his mother perched up on the back of an enormous cart-horse. The horse was so large, and he so small, that materfamilias would in all probability have

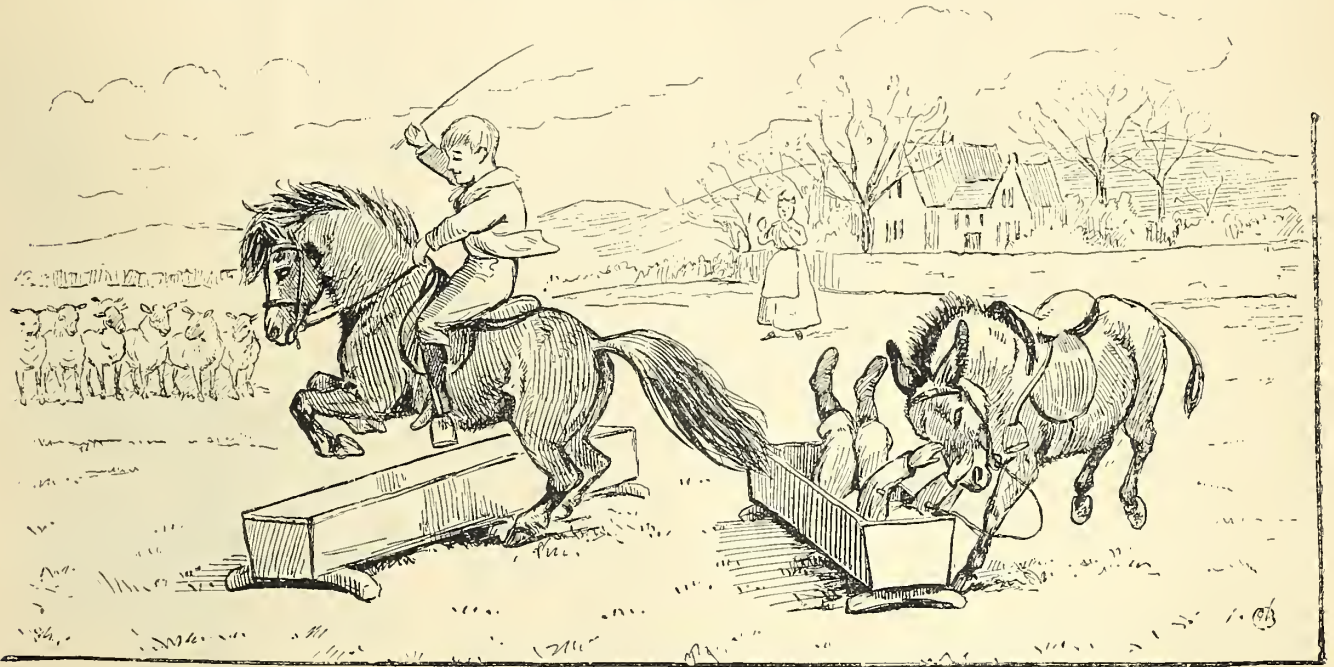
of Great Britain, at a period long before the Christian era, acquired great expertness in the use of the horse. So we see that the hereditary love of the horse that fires the breasts of the Masters Pickle, and other British boys, dates back through a very long line of ancestors.

The breeds of ponies that exist in England are nearly as old as the hills on which they run wild.

Henry VIII., amongst his many objec-

minimum height for a mare thirteen hands, or fifty-two inches at the shoulder. The magistrates were ordered to drive the forests, at certain periods of the year, and

brought in droves to the fairs held about the country in the summer and autumn. Tough, wiry little animals they are, of a tribe reared for generations untold, on



Master George and Master Felix.

tionable practices, tried to exterminate the breed of ponies. He wished to raise the height and quality of the horses, and thought to do so by destroying all that were undersized. He fixed a standard

destroy all undersized horses, namely, ponies.

These severe measures did no harm, fortunately, for they improved the standard of horses, and only banished the ponies to

mountains and moorlands, without shelter, and without other food than the natural herbage. The true pony is bred, because nothing of a greater size can be reared under the circumstance of soil and climate.



THE PONY FAIR.

height for horses in Great Britain, the minimum height for a horse being fifteen hands, or sixty inches at the shoulder; the

the hills of Scotland and Wales, and the uninhabited parts of Devonshire.

Descendants of these identical ponies are

Many of these ponies show plenty of quality, for of late years the breeds have been much improved by the intermingling

of better-bred ponies. A good pony should look like a miniature hunter; that is the shape of every good riding pony. But in these droves may be seen ponies with points resembling those of any other animal but the horse—such as a ewe-neck, sow's ears, calf-knees, ewe-hocks, mule-foot, rat-tail, goose-rump, and other eccentricities. Though one or more of these freaks of nature may not be looked upon in the light of a blemish, still it makes a pony look common; and it is a recognised fact that the horse with the best points, that is, the best shaped horse, is the best mover, and, therefore, the more highly prized animal.

The misshapen, common, undersized ponies that come to the fairs are bought by hawkers and tradesmen, and are doomed to perpetual slavery. Some fifty years ago there was little or no demand for ponies, because dogs were used as beasts of draught in these lines of business. When Lord Ashley's Act came into operation, in 1840, forbidding boys being worked in coal-mines as beasts of draught, then again there was a demand for thousands of these hardy little ponies to go down into the pits, and at the present day farmers, who, years ago, could afford to keep a good hunter or a decent nag horse, now, owing to the low price of corn and stock, buy these miniature steeds instead.

A very stirring spirited scene one of these droves of ponies makes at a country fair, with the gipsy drovers, who look nearly as wild and rough as their ponies. It will be good practice to look over the rough lot and try and pick out a good-shaped pony, for it is only by practical observation that the eye will get to detect good from bad. Books may put you in the way of acquiring

this knowledge, but alone they can never make you a judge of a horse.

There is an old Yorkshire proverb that "you must buy a horse with every fault before you are fit to buy one in a fair." I will defer what I have to say on the subject of buying until we have arrived at what is a good pony.

There stands the drove, huddled together, heads in and tails out, with the gipsies who have walked them a hundred miles or more, down from the hill-country.

"Whoa-ho, you wild Welsh Wales!" shouts a young urchin, skirmishing round with a flag to keep all the ponies on the *qui vive*. Another man scrambles across the backs of the drove to get to the head of a pony he wishes to capture. After a short, sharp tussle he generally manages to get the halter on, and the pony is then hauled out by main force, to show off his paces to likely-looking customers.

"Here you are, sir! A real broad-backed one! Only three year old! And if you don't buy him, carry him away with you in your hey!"

Before you is a rough-coated little steed, with matted mane and tail; a neat little head, and an eye as wild as a hawk's.

"Look at his shoulders, sir! Just the right slope; and four black legs as sound as bars of iron. He's as poor as a crow and as proud as a peacock! Trot him down the road, Jim, and let the gentleman see the little rascal move himself. A real honest pony, and no mistake about it!"

With shouts, yells, cracking of whips, and flourishing of flags, the pony, nearly scared out of his seven senses, flies along, until he is pulled up with a jerk from the long rope.

When he finds a purchaser, at a price varying from seven to twelve pounds, according to his merits or demerits, it is the signal for ringing cheers and throwing of hats into the air by the rough gipsy eopers. "Hie, hie! sold! Sold a-g-a-i-n!"

It is a mistake for boys to begin to ride too young; their bones should set first, or riding may distort them and put them all out of shape. The Masters Pickle never had ponies of their own until they had got into the Upper Third Form of their first public school; then they were allowed to ride regularly when home for the holidays.

Knowing from experience the punishing nature of the cane, they now think twice before administering it to their ponies.

(To be continued.)



THROUGH CENTRAL ASIA.

BY REV. HENRY LANSDELL, D.D.

PART II.

BOKHARA being left with due ceremony, the desert had to be crossed: and the experiences therein were not so pleasant:

"Sevier and I mounted our horses and preceded the tarantass, the attendants asking us not to go too far ahead, lest we should be lost. When once fairly on to the desert we found ourselves amid surroundings the like to which I had never seen before, and would not willingly experience again. The only vegetation was some dwarf bushes a few inches high, under which ran here and there, like squirrels, the long-tailed marmot, and even these were soon left behind, and the bushes gave place to sand-dunes not unlike those found on parts of our own coasts. The shape of the hills was uniform, each presenting the form of a horseshoe, the convex side being sloped towards the north, whilst the concave side was precipitous. Sometimes we saw a barkhan had been formed by the walls of a house, with the result that it had continued to grow till the building was buried. Nothing appeared able to stay the advancing scourge, and the desolation of the scene was, in our case, heightened tenfold by a blustering wind, that drove the sand in our faces. As we looked ahead, one bare hill rose above another like waves of the ocean, whilst the tempest blew the sand from their crests like spray, and all this on a scale that strikingly brought to my mind the waves I had seen in crossing the Northern Pacific.

"For seven miles we dragged on to the frontier of the Bekship, where we were met by fifteen horsemen, who came to take our

tarantass to the Oxus; but imagine our dismay when we discovered that they had brought with them only one horse-collar! They asked the party from Kara-Kul to lend them theirs, but they declined, took out their horses, and were making off. The Amliakdar came to take his congé, and I gave him a present, but it was not till his back was turned that we realised our critical position. We were left like a boat in mid-ocean. All around was sand—sand everywhere—and our late protectors had pitilessly bolted.

"Sevier suggested that they should be forced to return, which perhaps might have been effected with a revolver pointed at them. But it was too late, and we were obliged to turn to our new attendants, who stood discussing what was to be done, for there was not another horse-collar to be had within several miles. My interference was no use, so I left the men to their own devices, whereupon one horse was put in the shafts, and ropes, fastened to the tarantass, were attached to the saddles of the rest, and in this novel fashion the vehicle was dragged along. I thought, therefore, it would be best for Sevier and me, with Yakool to interpret, to go forward and send back reinforcements. Moreover, a Russian officer in Samarkand had told me of the terrible difficulty we should have had with the tarantass, and had given me a hint not to meddle in the matter. 'If,' said he, 'the Emir gives the order that your tarantass is to be taken to the Oxus, it is their affair, not yours; you had better go on, and leave them to follow.' I therefore took the

chief man for a guide, and left the tarantass in charge of Kohitch and Fazul. Our guide was an old man, but mounted on a good Turkoman horse, and him we followed over little mountains of sand. As we struggled on we met scarcely any travellers, and wondered more than enough how they would get the carriage over the barkhans, as high as London houses. It was no small relief when, late in the afternoon, we came to a pool of water, said to be three miles from the kishlak Betik, after which we soon reached the house of our guide."

The crossing of the desert took the doctor to Charjui, and then followed a remarkable river journey:—

"The prospect of floating three hundred miles down the Oxus, not in a puffing steamer, but in a fashion as ancient as the days of Noah at least, was to me a new sensation, and one heightened in interest by the recollection that over this part of my journey, at all events, no Englishman had ever preceded me. The native boats are rude, flat-bottomed barges, built of logs of paki-wood, elipped square, and cobbled together with iron clamps. It was in a craft of this kind we were to descend the river from Charjui, a willow-built barge, of the value of about £22, fifty feet long, ten feet in beam, and four feet deep, drawing, perhaps, eighteen inches of water. The gunwale was just low enough for me to reach over, sponge in hand, and get an apology for a morning wash. Such boats would make an admirable bridge, and the river bed offers excellent anchorage. These Bokhariot boats are said to carry one hun-

dred and fifty passengers and twenty tons of cargo, or twenty mounted men with their horses, which I should think close work for a journey, though it might do for a ferry passage. In our own case, we were favoured, as the Emir's guests, with a boat to ourselves.

"The tarantass was placed midships, and abaft were five horses of mine belonging to Yakoub, whilst the fore part was occupied by eight oarsmen, with two as a guard, besides Khudaiar Bek, a Karaul-beggi, to look after us. The authorities, moreover, not content with giving us guards against Turkoman robbers in the boat, furnished us also with five horsemen to ride along the shore. These latter were presented to us at Guzhar Tozakar, after which they got into a ferry-boat with horses and camels, and crossed to the east bank. The river here, they told us, was two thousand kadarm in width, or rather less than two thousand yards.

"There were no houses near, yet the crossing ferry-boat and the crowd attracted—I suppose to see the foreigners start—made rather a lively scene. We stepped on board at twenty minutes past one, the Muhammadans giving a parting blessing, and stroking their beards as they shouted 'Allah akbar!' (the mighty God!) and 'Yakshi sagat!' (a pleasant journey!)—the former intended, I suppose, for the 'faithful,' and the latter for us 'infidels.'"

But our extracts are running to an unlooked for length; let us conclude with

what it would be a pity to omit, the graphic description of the excited, frenzied worship of the Jahria Brotherhood at Samarkand:

"The proceedings reminded me," says the doctor, "of the service of the so-called howling dervishes at Constantinople.

"At Samarkand the mosque was well filled with an audience seated on the floor, whilst opposite the entrance, near the Kibleh, were eleven men, ejaculating prayers with loud cries and violent movements of the body. They utter exclamations such as 'Hasbi rabi jal Allah!' (My defence is the Lord; may Allah be magnified!) 'Mo fi kalbi hir Allah!' (There is nothing but God in my heart!); 'Nuri Muhammad sall Allah!' (My light, Muhammad, God bless him!); 'La iloha ill Allah!' (There is no God but Allah!). These words, or some of them, are chanted to various semi-musical tones, first in a low voice, and accompanied by a movement of the head over the left shoulder towards the heart, then back, then to the right shoulder, and then down, as if directing all the movements to the heart. Sometimes I observed a man, more excited than the rest, shout a sentence, throw out his arms, dance, jump, and then slap his left breast with such force as to make the place ring. These expressions are repeated several hundreds of times, till the devotees get so exhausted and so hoarse that their repetitions sound like a succession of groans, and we could see the perspiration running through their clothes. Some were obliged to give up and

rest, whilst others were pushed out by the Ishan who was conducting, and who called some one else to fill up gaps in the ranks. When their voices have become entirely hoarse with one cry, another is begun. They sit at first in a row, but later on, as the movements quicken, each puts his hand on his neighbour's shoulder, and they form in a group, as Dr. Schuyler says, 'in several concentric rings,' but which could remind a native of Blackheath of nothing but a group of players during a 'scrummage' in Rugby football as they sway from side to side of the mosque, leaping about, jumping up and down, and crying, 'Hai! Allah Hai!' like a pack of madmen, till the Ishan gives them a rest by reciting a prayer, or a hafiz recites poetry; or, as at Samarkand, a dervish sings a solo in a fervid, trilling voice. One curious part of the service, as I saw it at Constantinople, was that persons apparently sick were brought to the minister to be stretched on the floor, whilst he set his foot on their shoulders, breasts, etc. In one case, eight men, women, and children, being laid in a row side by side, he deliberately planted his elephantine foot on the first and walked over them all, one woman, I observed, making a terrible grimace as she received his whole weight. After this ordeal they all went up and kissed their benefactor's hand. Besides this, various garments and vessels, bottles, etc., were brought to him to breathe his holy breath upon, and thus impart his blessing."

(THE END.)

THE "BOY'S OWN" HOME OF REST FOR WORKING BOYS.

[Contributions received up to December 12th, 1887.]

	£	s.	d.
Brought forward	537	2	4½
November 4.—Collected by Wilfred Gale, 15s.; W. E. Brock, 5s.; "Knabe," 2s. 6d.	1	2	6
November 5.—Collected by H. Pitt, 20s.; Collected by Rowland Powell, 16s. 6d.	1	16	6
November 11.—Commander Charles E. Reade	0	10	0
November 17.—J. H. Whitehouse, 2s. 3d.; A. C. Pleydell, 6d.	0	2	9
November 19.—Collected by Miss J. R. Bacon	0	8	0
November 22.—Collected by Stephen Hall, 1s. 6d.; "Vigorian," 1s. 6d.	0	3	0
November 28.—Collected by Robert W. Lowden, 4s.; Collected by Edward Vowles, 1s. 2d.; Collected by H. Pitt, 22s.; Collected by A. Macphail, 3s.; Collected by James B. Kerr, 10s.	2	0	2
November 29.—Collected by W. A. Lea, 10s.; Collected by A. T. Long, 2s. 6d.; Collected by Alan Crawford, 10s. 6d.; Collected by W. J. Redwan, 1s. 6d.; Collected by H. E. Mathews, 5s.	1	9	6
December 2.—Collected by Tom R. Rose, 10s.; Woodhouse Lane Methodist New Connection Sunday-school (Leeds), collected by A. Bedford, W. L. Boyes, J. Gray, and A. Jones, £1 12s.; Collected by Wm. Leitch, 3s. 6d.; Collected by E. J. Macdonald, 4s.; Collected by A. B. Cater, 2s.	2	11	6
December 8.—H. Pitt, 1s.; Collected by J. W. Shepherd, 2s. 6d.; Chas. Yates, 1s. 6d.	0	5	0
December 12.—Collected by R. Vincent Brown, 18s.; Collected by W. F. Melhuish, 7s.	1	5	0
Carried forward	£545	16	3½

[Will those who have had Collecting Cards three months and over kindly return them at once, whether they have collected anything or not? This will save us the labour of applying to each one indi-

vidually, and will do more to help on the object we have in view than their keeping the cards in hopes of further donations. We shall be glad to supply with fresh cards those wishing to continue collecting.]

OUR NOTE BOOK.

"HARRY TREVERTON."

Just after the last chapter of this most interesting story had been dismissed by us for press, two communications reached us which showed that by some strange misarrangement of a letter honour was not given, as it would have been, where it would seem to be unquestionably due. First Lady Broome herself, who had only a few hours before arrived in England, wrote:

"There are two points on which I was anxious to communicate with you. One is the mistake, arising from my letter on the subject to — not having been forwarded to you. In that letter I carefully and minutely explained that although the Ms. of 'Harry Treverton' was in my writing—I having, in fact, recast and re-written the story—I did not wish to claim the authorship, but only to appear as the editor of the tale. It is written by a Mr. W. H. Timperley, a very valued colonist, at present Superintendent of Rottnest Island, and for many years an Inspector of Police in Western Australia. He supplied the rough draft of the material, drawn from his own experience and knowledge, and I undertook to present it in a readable form.

Then the mail brought us, from Mr. Timperley, a cutting from the "West Australian" of October 12th, which we have pleasure in quoting *verbatim*:

"A new aspirant for literary fame has appeared in the person of Mr. W. H. Timperley, Superintendent of Rottnest Island. 'Far from the madding crowd,' he has devoted the leisure won from his official duties on his island home to the writing of a West Australian story. It is entitled 'Harry Treverton,' and has advanced so far beyond the merely initial stage as to have been actually accepted by a publisher, and it is now in the press. Lady Broome, we are informed, kindly undertook the task of looking over the work, and in some respect to edit it, at the special request of Mr. Timperley. It is to be published in 'The Boy's Own Paper,' as a serial story, and the opening chapters will probably appear in the number of that periodical for the present

month, which will arrive here about the end of November. The subject matter of the work deals with the life and adventures of a youth who, owing to adverse and unforeseen circumstances, found himself, about thirty years ago, thrown on his own resources in Western Australia. The history of his life, touching, as it will do, many things and many events which must be familiar to hundreds of people here, and which must also have an interest for others to whom such conditions and events are new and strange, will surely enable the author to weave a tale that will secure the attention, arouse the sympathy, and attract the fancy, not only of the young folks, but of others of more mature growth and understanding. The foundation of the story is laid on facts—on events that have actually occurred—and all the characters, we are told, have lived, and moved, and had their being amid the scenes of this colony. Some of those who are pictured in the book, we are assured, still live; others have passed away to the land of shadows. The following extract from a letter by the editor of 'The Boy's Own Paper' to Lady Broome—who, as already said, has deeply interested herself in the matter—will show how far the work has progressed, and how near Mr. Timperley's labours are to fruition. The writer says:—"Harry Treverton" is quite safe in my hands. It is now being rather elaborately illustrated by a well-known artist, Mr. Alfred Pearce, and will commence in our October numbers, which go to press towards the end of August." Since Mr. Timperley is so widely and favourably known in this colony, the local booksellers may expect an extensive demand for their future supplies of the periodical referred to."

THE ONLY SURE SAFEGUARD.

Dr. John Hall thus earnestly appeals to those commencing the battle of life: "Lead me not into temptation! Oh, young man, thinking within yourself, 'I am so strong, there is no fear about me,' I tell you you make the most dreadful mistake. The very fact that you think yourself strong, opens up the way for the devil and his insidious attacks. Fling temptation aside. 'Come on the Lord's side, and be His; and when you say, 'Lead me not into temptation,' move in the direction of your prayer, and God will give you the strength in which alone you shall be able to conquer the tempter. Then you will be delivered from evil, and then you will look up to God, not taking credit to yourself, not magnifying yourself, but saying, 'Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.'"

Correspondence.

CANARIES.—Yes, you can keep them in a bedroom, but be careful to keep their cages very clean.

A. HAMMOND.—Our articles on Violin-making were in the November and December parts for 1882.

NEMO.—We have already had coloured plates of the uniforms of the British Army, and of the Navy, and of the Volunteers; and we cannot repeat a coloured plate.

W. D.—Vols. III. and IV. are out of print in all forms.

PAUL CINQUEVALLI.—The articles on "Juggling" were in the part for August, 1881.

BELGRAVE.—A "cacolet" is a litter or pannier for the wounded.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.—Leave the poodle's hair alone. It is natural enough.

T. H. VOSS.—If the goat will eat acorns, they will do no harm.

CH. WELLS.—Thanks for your letter. Very glad to know that many boys follow our instructions and profit by them. Do not overcrowd, or you will have disease. Yes, it was the scarlet-runners that caused the inflammation. In-and-in breeding is right enough under certain skilled restrictions. It is the natural law in their wild state, but wild animals are more healthy than tame ones. Your little stud-book is capital.

D. S.—The series known as "The Boy's Own Pigeon Loft and Dovecot," by the Professional Judge, was in the third volume, which is now out of print.

JACOBIN.—The unicorn in the royal arms is the Scotch supporter. See our article, with coloured plate, in the February part for 1881.

J. T. (an old B. O. P.).—To colour a gun-barrel, warm it slightly, and cover it with a paste made of chloride of antimony and olive oil, which you should clean off after some hours, and then polish the barrel with a piece of hard wood. Chloride of antimony is sold under the name of bronzing-salt.

ALBATROSS.—The stories by Jules Verne that have appeared in the BOY'S OWN PAPER are "Dick Sands," "The Giant Raft," "The Cryptogram," "Godfrey Morgan," "The Vanished Diamond," and "The Clipper of the Clouds."

H. D. S.—We gave the formula for finding a schooner's mast and sail-plan on page 623 of Vol. VI.

MODEL YACHT.—The Thistle is 110 3/4 ft. over all, 86 1/4 ft. on water-line, 98 ft. from stem to sternpost on deck, 20 3/4 ft. beam, and 14 1/2 ft. draught. Her mainboom is 81 1/4 ft. long, her gaff 51 1/2 ft., the hoist of her mainsail 110 ft. From the mast to her bowsprit-end is 70 ft.

FELIX and INQUIRER.—We gave full measurements in our article on "Hammocks, and all about them," in the second volume. The body should be 5 ft. sin. long and a yard wide.

A. W. L.—We had an article on "The Canadian or Birch-bark Canoe" in the October part for 1883.

TWO FOOLS.—Quite so! 1. Why should an engineer be called a lieutenant? He is not a lieutenant; he is an engineer. 2. An assistant-clerk R.N. does not wear a cocked hat. 3. The Genesta never was the "crack yacht of England;" she was always inferior to Ilex, and nearly always to Marjorie.



"Pride goeth before a fall."

G. R.—Certainly; so many men in the British army are promoted from the ranks during each year, but they have to pass an examination, which examination is, however, a technical one, and not the same as that passed by officers. All soldiers have to go to school until they can pass certain examinations; and no promotion, even to a corporal's stripes, takes place unless the candidate has a certificate of having passed in reading, writing, general knowledge, etc. A man who cannot read or write will remain a private all the time he is in the service.

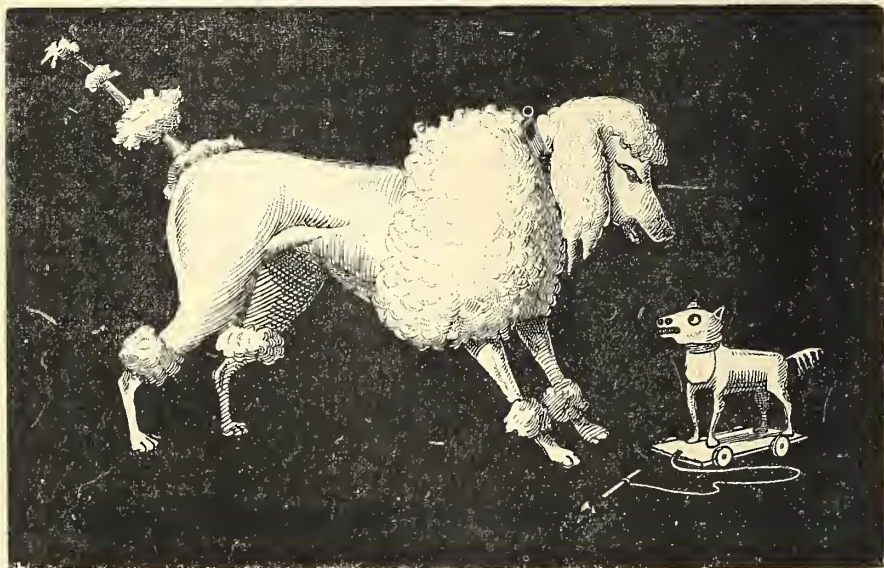
LEONARD BETTS.—Feather-eating is a most intractable complaint. The quassia-water will do little good. Try an entire change of diet. Give a tonic by putting rusty nails in water, and feed on fresh milk-sop, with plenty of bread-and-butter sprinkled with cayenne.

UBIQUE.—It is possible to learn book-keeping from books only, but you are not likely to do it from such books as are used in schools. We have often given the names of two books that afford all the needful information and examples without making a mystery of them. They are "Professional Book-keeping," price two shillings, published by Wyman and Sons, Great Queen Street, W.C.; and "Book-keeping for Traders," by R. Y. Barnes, price one shilling, obtainable of most City stationers.

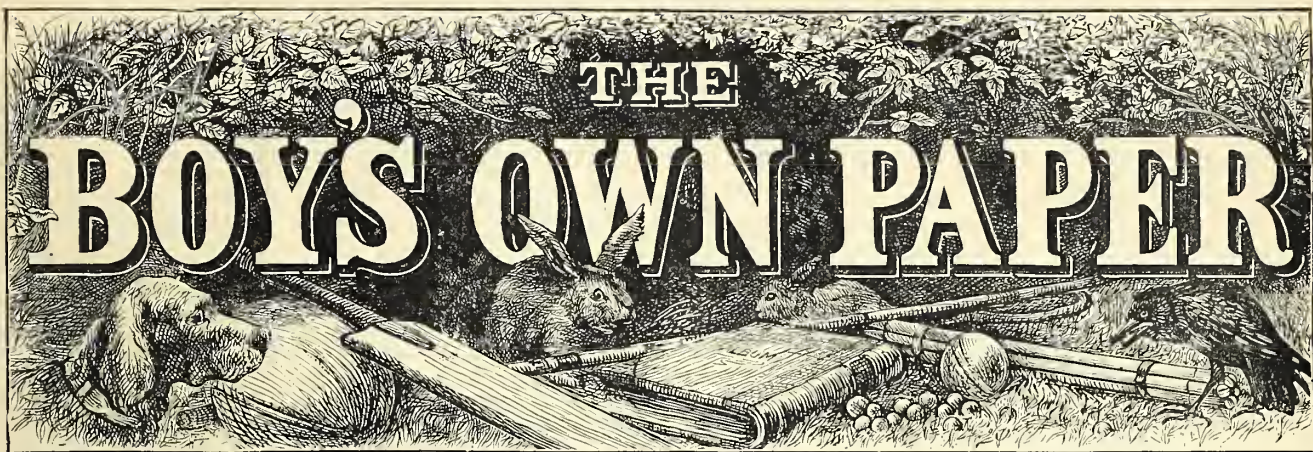
OLD RECTOR.—We have seen many good collections of postmarks. They do not look so ornamental as stamps, but they give a better knowledge of geography; for, while stamps deal only with countries, postmarks deal with towns.

G. GOLDS.—1. Awards in such competitions are made, not on the number of combinations of letters sent in, but on the number of words passed as legitimate. 2. The numbers on the metronome probably show the beats per minute.

CHAMPION.—Indian Clubs were treated of in the August and September parts for 1882.



Extremes Meet!



No. 472.—Vol. X.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 1888.

Price One Penny.
[ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]

THE MIDDY AND THE MOORS:

AN ALGERINE STORY.

By R. M. BALLANTYNE.

CHAPTER IV.—OUR MIDDY IS PUT TO WORK—ALSO PUT ON HIS “WORD-HONOUR” AND RECEIVES A GREAT SHOCK OF SURPRISE.

GEORGE FOSTER.
soon found



that his master and owner, Ben-Ahmed, was a stern and exacting, but by no means an ill-natured or cruel, man. He appeared to be considerably over sixty years of age but showed no signs of abated

“A female in the rich dress of a Moorish lady.”

vigour. In character he was amiable and just, according to his light, but dignified and reticent.

His first act, after seating himself cross-legged on a carpet in a marble and tessellated recess, was to call for a hookah. He smoked that for a few minutes and contemplated the courtyard on which the recess opened. It was a pleasant object of contemplation, being filled with young orange-trees and creeping plants of a tropical kind, which were watered by a stone fountain in the centre of the court. This fountain also served to replenish a marble bath, to cool the sultry air, and to make pleasant tinkling music. Of course the nose was not forgotten in this luxurious assemblage of things that were gratifying to ear and eye. Flowers of many kinds were scattered around, and sweet-scented plants perfumed the air.

Ben-Ahmed's next act, after having lighted his pipe, was to summon Peter the Great and his new slave—the former to act as interpreter, for it was a peculiarity of this Moor that though he appeared to understand English he would not condescend to speak it.

After asking several questions as to our hero's name, age, and calling in life, he told Peter to inform Foster that escape from that country was impossible, that any attempt to escape would be punished with flogging and other torture, that perseverance in such attempts would result in his being sent to work in chains with the Bagnio slaves, and would probably end in death from excessive toil, torture, and partial starvation. Having said this, the Moor asked several questions—through the negro and always in the *Lingua Franca*.

"Massa bids me ax," said Peter, "if you are a gentleman, an' if you know it am de custom in England for gentleman-pris'ners to gib dere word-ob-honour dat dey not run away, an' den go about as if dey was free?"

"Tell him that every officer in the service of the King of England is considered a gentleman."

"Come now, sar," interrupted Peter, sternly, "you know das not true. I bin in England myself—cook to a French rest'rung in London—an' I nebber hear dat a *pleecee* officer was a gentleman!"

"Well, I mean every commissioned officer in the army and navy," returned Foster, "and when such are taken prisoner I am aware that they are always allowed a certain amount of freedom of action on giving their word of honour that they will not attempt to escape."

When this was explained to Ben-Ahmed, he again said a few words to the negro, who translated as before.

"Massa say dat as you are a gentleman if you will gib your word-ob-honour not to escape he will make you free. Not kite free, ob course, but free to work in de gardin' widout chains; free to sleep in de outhouse widout bein' locked up ob nights, an' free to enjoy you'self w'en you gits de chance."

Foster looked keenly at the negro, being uncertain whether or not he was jesting, but the solemn features of that arch "hyperkrite" were no index to the working of his eccentric mind—save when he permitted them to speak; then, indeed, they were almost more intelligible than the plainest language.

"And what if I refuse to pledge my word for the sake of such freedom?" asked our hero.

"W'y, den you'll git whacked, an' you'll spience uncommon hard times, an' you'll change you mind bery soon, so I tink, on de whole, you better change 'im at once. Seems to me you's a remarkably obs'nit young feller!"

With a sad feeling that he was doing something equivalent to locking the door and throwing away the key, Foster gave the required promise, and was forthwith conducted into the garden and set to work.

His dark friend supplied him with a new striped cotton shirt—his own having been severely torn during his recent adventures—also with a pair of canvas trousers, a linen jacket, and a straw hat with a broad brim; all of which fitted him badly, and might have caused him some discomfort in other circumstances, but he was too much depressed just then to care much for anything. His duty that day consisted in digging up a piece of waste ground. To relieve his mind, he set to work with tremendous energy, inasmuch that Peter the Great, who was looking on, exclaimed,

"Hi! what a digger you is! You'll bust up algotidder if you goes on like dat. De moles is nuffin' to you."

But Foster heeded not. The thought that he was now doomed to hopeless slavery, perhaps for life, was pressed home to him more powerfully than ever, and he felt that if he was to save himself from going mad he must work with his muscles like a tiger, and, if possible, cease to think. Accordingly, he went on toiling till the perspiration poured down his face, and all his sinews were strained.

"Poor boy!" muttered the negro in a low tone, "he's tryin' to dig his own grave. But he not succeed. Many a man try dat before now, and failed. Howsomeber, it's blowin' a hard gale wid him just now—an' de harder it blow de sooner it's ober. Arter de storm comes de calu."

With these philosophic reflections, Peter the Great went off to his own work, leaving our hero turning over the soil like a steam-plough.

Strong though Foster was—both of muscle and will—he was but human after all. In course of time he stopped from sheer exhaustion, flung down the spade, and, raising himself with his hands stretched up and his face turned to the sky, he cried:—

"God help me! what shall I do?"

Then, dropping his face on his hands, he stood for a considerable time quite motionless.

"What a fool I was to promise not to try to escape," he thought, and a feeling of despair followed the thought, but a certain touch of relief came when he reflected that at any time he could go boldly to his master, withdraw the promise, and take the consequences.

He was still standing like a statue, with his hands covering his face, when he felt a light touch on his shoulder. It was the negro who had returned to see how he was getting on.

"Look yar, now, Geo'ge," he said in quite a fatherly manner, "dis'll neber do. My massa buy you to work in de gardin', not to stand like a statoo

washin' its face widout soap or water. We don't want no more statooos. Got more'n enuff ob marble ones all around. Besides, you don't make a good statoo—leastwise not wid dem slop clo'es on. Now, come yar, Geo'ge. I wants a little combersation wid you. I'll preach you a small sarmin if you'll allow me."

So saying, Peter led his assistant slave into a cool arbour, where Ben-Ahmed was won't at times to soothe his spirits with a pipe.

"Now, look yar, Geo'ge, dis won't do. I say it once for all—*dis won't do!*"

"I know it won't, Peter," replied the almost heart-broken middy with a sad smile, "you're very kind. I know you take an interest in me, and I'll try to do better, but I'm not used to spade-work, you know, and—"

"Spade-work!" shouted Peter, laying his huge black hand on Foster's shoulder, and giving him a squeeze that made him wince, "das not what I mean. Work! w'y you's done more'n a day's work in one hour, judging by de work ob ordinary slabs. No, das not it. What's wrong is dat you don't rightly understand your privileges. Das de word, your privileges. Now, look yar. I don't want you to break your heart before de time, an' fur dat purpos I would remind you dat while dar's life dar's hope. Moreober, you's got no notion what luck you're in. If a bad massa got hold ob you, he gib you no noo clo'es, he gib you hard, black bread 'stead o' de good grub what you gits yar. He make you work widout stoppin' all day, and whack you on de sole ob your foots if you di'y say one word. Was you eber whacked on de sole ob your foots?"

"No, never," replied Foster, amused in spite of himself by the negro's earnest looks and manner.

"Ho! den you don't know yet what Paradise am."

"Paradise, Peter? You mean the other place, I suppose."

"No, sar, I mean nothin' ob de sort. I mean de Paradise what comes arter it's ober, an' you 'gins to git well again. Hah! but you'll find it out some day. But, to continuo, you's got ebery ting what's comfrable here. If you on'y sawd de Bagnio slabs at work—I'll take you to see 'em some day—den you'll be content an' pleased wid your lot till de time comes when you escape."

"Escape! How can I escape, Peter, now that I have given my word of honour not to try."

"Noting easier," replied the negro, calmly, "you's on'y got to break your word-ob-honour!"

"I'm sorry to hear you say that, my friend," returned Foster, "for it shakes my confidence in you. You must know that an English gentleman *never* breaks his word—that is, he never *should* break it—and you may rest assured that I will not break mine. If your view of such matters is so loose, Peter, what security have I that you won't deceive *me* and betray *me* when it is your interest or your whim to do so?"

"Security! Massa? I lub you! I's fond o' your smood babby face. Isn't dat security enough?"

Foster could not help admitting that it was, as long as it lasted!

"But what," he asked, "what security has Ben-Ahmed, that you won't be as false to him as you recommend me to be?"

"I lub massa too!" answered the negro, with a bland smile.

"What—love a man whom you have described to me as the most obstinate fellow you ever knew."

"Ob course I do," returned Peter. "W'y not? A obs'nit man may be as good as anoder man what can be shoyed about any way you please. Ha! you not know yit what it is to hab a *bad* massa. Wait a bit; you find it out, p'raps, soon enough. Look yar."

He bared his bosom as he spoke and displayed to his wondering and sympathetic friend a mass of old scars and gashes and healed-up sores.

"Dis what my last massa do to me, 'cause I not quite as smart as he wish. De back an' wuss. Oh! if you know'd a bad massa, you'd be thankful to-day for gittin' a good 'un. Now, what I say is, nobody never knows what's a-goin' to turn up. You just keep quiet an' wait. Some slabs yar hab waited patiently for ten—fifteen-year, an' more. What den? Sure to scape sooner or later. Many are ransom in a year or two. Oders longer. Lots ob 'em die, an' scape dat way. Keep up your heart, Geo'ge, whateber you do, and, if you won't break your word-ob-honour, something else'll be sure to turn up."

Although the negro's mode of affording comfort and encouragement was not based entirely on sound principles, his cheery and hopeful manner went a long way to lighten the load of care that had been settling down like a dead weight on young Foster's heart, and he returned to his work with a happier spirit than he had possessed since the day he leaped upon the deck of the pirate vessel.

That night he spent under the same roof with his black friend and a number of the other slaves, none of whom, however, were his countrymen, or could speak any language that he understood. His bed was the tiled floor of an out-house, but there was plenty of straw on it. He had only one blanket, but the nights as well as days were warm, and his food, although of the simplest kind and chiefly vegetable, was good in quality and sufficient in quantity.

The next day, at the first blush of morning light, he was aroused with the other slaves by Peter the Great, who, he found, was the Moor's overseer of domestics. He was put to the same work as before, but that day his friend the negro was sent off on a mission that was to detain him several days from home. Another man took Peter's place, but, as he spoke neither English nor French, no communication passed between the overseer and slave except by signs. As, however, the particular job on which he had been put was simple, this did not matter. During the period of Peter's absence the poor youth felt the oppression of his isolated condition keenly. He sank to a lower condition than before, and when his friend returned he was surprised to find how much of his happiness depended on the sight of his jovial black face!

"Now Geo'ge" was the negro's first remark on seeing him, "you's down in de blues again!"

"Well, I confess I have not been very bright in your absence, Peter. Not a soul to speak a word to; nothing but my own thoughts to entertain me; and poor entertainment they have been. D'you know, Peter, I think I should die if it were not for you."

"Nebber a bit ob it, massa. You's too cheeky to die soon. I'se noticed, in my 'sperience, dat de young slabs as has got most self-conceit an' imprence is allers hardest to kill."

"I scarce know whether to take that as encouragement or otherwise," returned Foster, with the first laugh he had given vent to for a long time.

"Take it how you please, Geo'ge, as de doctor said to de dyn' man—won't matter much in de long run. But come 'long wid me an' let's hab a talk ober it all. Le's go to de bower."

In the bower the poor middy found some consolation by pouring his sorrows into the great black sympathetic breast of Peter the Great, though it must be confessed that Peter occasionally took a strange way to comfort him.

One of the negro's perplexities lay in the difficulty he had to convince our midshipman of his great good-fortune in having fallen into the hands of a kind master, and having escaped the terrible fate of the many who had cruel tyrants as their owners, who were tortured and beaten when too ill to work, who had bad food to eat and not too much of it, and who were whipped to death sometimes when they rebelled. Although Foster listened and considered attentively, he failed to appreciate what his friend sought to impress, and continued in a state of almost overwhelming depression because of the simple fact that he was a slave—a bought and sold slave!

"Now look yar, Geo'ge" said the negro, remonstratively, "you *is* a slabe; das a fact, an' no application ob fut rule or compasses, or de mul'plication table, or any oder table, kin change dat. Dere you an—a slabe! But you ain't a 'bused slabe, a whacked slabe, a tortured slabe, a dead slabe. You're all alibe an' kickin', Geo'ge! So you cheer up, an' something sure to come ob it; an' if not—ing comes ob it, w'y de cheerin' up hab come ob it, anyhow."

Foster smiled faintly at this philosophical view of his case, and did make a brave effort to follow the advice of his friend.

"Das right, now, Geo'ge; you laugh an' grow fat. Moreober, you go to work now, for if Massa come an' find us here, he's bound to know de reason why! Go to work, Geo'ge, an' forgit your troubles. Das *my* way—an' I's got a heap o' troubles, bress you!"

So saying, Peter the Great rose and left our forlorn midshipman sitting in the arbour, where he remained for some time ruminating on past, present, and future instead of going to work.

Apart from the fact of his being a slave, the youth's condition at the moment was by no means disagreeable, for he was seated in a garden which must have borne no little resemblance to the great original of Eden, in a climate that may well be described as heavenly, with a view before him of similar gardens which swept in all their rich luxuriance over the slopes in front of

him until they terminated on the edge of the blue and sparkling sea.

While seated there, lost in reverie, he was startled by the sound of approaching footsteps—very different indeed from the heavy tread of his friend Peter. A guilty conscience made him glance round for a way of escape, but there was only one entrance to the bower. While he was hesitating how to act, an opening in the foliage afforded him a passing glimpse of a female in the rich dress of a Moorish lady.

He was greatly surprised, being well aware of the jealousy with which Mohammedans guard their ladies from the eyes of men. The explanation might lie in this, that Ben-Ahmed, being eccentric in this as in most other matters, afforded the inmates of his harem unusual liberty. Before he had time to think much on the subject, however, the lady in question turned into the arbour and stood before him.

If the word thunderstruck did justice in any degree to the state of mind which we wish to describe we would gladly use it, but it does not. Every language, from Gaelic to Chinese, equally fails to furnish an adequate word. We therefore avoid the impossible and proceed, merely remarking that from the expression of both faces it was evident that each had met with a crushing surprise.

We can understand somewhat the midshipman's state of mind, for the being who stood before him was—was—well, we are again nonplussed! Suffice it to say that she was a girl of fifteen summers—the other forty-five seasons, of course, being understood. Beauty of feature and complexion she had, but these were lost, as it were, and almost forgotten in her beauty of expression—tenderness, gentleness, urbanity, simplicity and benignity in a state of fusion! Now, do not run away, reader, with the idea of an Eastern princess, with gorgeous black eyes, raven hair, tall and graceful form, etc.! This apparition was fair, blue eyed, golden haired, girlish, sylphlike. She was graceful, indeed, as the gazelle, but not tall, and with an air of suavity that was irresistibly attractive. She had a "good" face as well as a beautiful, and there was a slightly pitiful look about the eyebrows that seemed to want smoothing away.

How earnestly George Foster desired—with a gush of pity, or something of that sort—to smooth it away! But he had too much delicacy of feeling as well as common sense to offer his services just then.

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed the girl, in perfect English, as she hastily threw a thin gauze veil over her face, "forgive me! I did not know you were here—else—my veil—but why should I mind such customs? You are an Englishman, I think?"

Foster did not feel quite sure at that moment whether he was English, Irish, Scotch, or Dutch, so he looked foolish and said—"y-yes."

"I knew it. I was sure of it! Oh! I am so glad!" exclaimed the girl, clasping her delicate little hands together and bursting into tears.

This was such a very unexpected climax, and so closely resembled the conduct of a child, that it suddenly

restored our midshipman to self-possession. Stepping quickly forward, he took one of the girl's hands in his, laid his other hand on her shoulder, and said:—

"Don't cry, my poor child! If I can help you in any way, I'll be only too glad; but pray don't, *don't* cry so."

"I—I—can't help it," sobbed the girl, pulling away her hand—not on account of propriety, by any means—that never entered her young head—but for the purpose of searching for a kerchief in a pocket that was *always* undiscoverable among bewildering folds. "If—if—you only knew how long, *long* it is since I heard an English—(where *is* that *thing*!)—an English voice, you would not wonder. And my father, my dear, dear,

darling father—I have not heard of him for—for—"

Here the poor thing broke down again and sobbed aloud, while the midshipman looked on, imbecile and helpless.

"Pray, *don't* cry," said Foster again, earnestly. "Who are you? where did you come from? Who and where is your father? Do tell me, and how I can help you, for we may be interrupted."

This last remark did more to quiet the girl than anything else he had said.

"You are right," she replied, drying her eyes quickly. "And, do you know the danger you run if found conversing with me?"

"No—not great danger, I hope?"

"The danger of being scourged to death, perhaps," she replied.

"Then pray *do* be quick, for I'd rather not get such a whipping—even for *your* sake!"

"But our owner is not cruel," continued the girl. "He is kind—"

"Owner! Is he not, then, your husband?"

"Oh no. He says he is keeping me for his son, who is away on a long voyage. I have never seen him—and—I have such a dread of his coming back!"

"But you are English, are you not?"

"Yes."

"And your father?"

"He is also English, and a slave. We have not met, nor have I heard of him since we were parted on board ship many months ago. Listen!"

(To be continued)

EDRIC THE NORSEMAN:

A TALE OF ADVENTURE AND DISCOVERY.

By J. F. HODGETTS,

Late Professor and Crown Examiner at Moscow, Author of "*Harold, the Boy-Earl*," "*Ivan Dobroff*," "*Kormak the Viking*," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE various furs and other things brought from the western lands, which had so long remained unknown to Europeans, excited wonder in the Dronthjem market. Prices were offered for these articles which, to the minds of simple Icelanders, seemed absolutely fabulous. Edric had seen the pretty pattern of the grain of maple wood, and one of the less savage Skrellings had shown him how it looked when polished by rubbing the surface smooth with stones and then applying beeswax. The pattern of the bird's-eye maple was something new, and so attractive that a Bremen merchant offered Edric half a mark of gold* for one of the small pieces he had polished!

A whole week long the fair continued, until at last the cargoes all were sold, to the great profit of our Iceland friends.

Olaf, the son of Tryggva, bought some furs at rather less than other people gave, but he was not the kind of man to *bargain* with. His argument in his conversions of his heathen countrymen was usually his sword. His custom was to enter a pagan district attended by a troop of armed retainers. Here he would call upon the heathens to submit at once, on pain of death, to baptism, and should a stern old champion of Odin's faith express his doubts as to the truth of Christianity, Olaf would *draw his sword*, and tell the doubter that the most convincing proof lay in the blade! Now, as the old religion was one of blows and blood, this was unanswerable. To refuse the combat was to confess a want of faith in Thor and Odin, to accept was certain death, for no one in the North could, single-handed, encounter Olaf Tryggvason and live! So Christianity was flourishing in Norway at this time.

One day, just at the end of Trondhjem fair, Edric and Thorfinn were in

Olaf's hall. The king had given them a grand repast, and all the champions from the ships had been invited to be present. During the feast, Edric, now high in favour with the king, drew from his belt a dagger to carve the meat presented by the servitors. Such was the custom in those early days.

"Holla, friend Edric!" cried the king; "who, in the name of all the saints, gave thee *my dagger*?"

Edric, observing it, remembered that it was the weapon with which his evil-minded uncle had sought to slay him on board the ship in Trondhjem harbour. He coloured slightly, and observed:

"Yes, king; this dagger is not mine. At least it *was* not. It is mine by conquest. I knew not that it ever had belonged to thee. Still, if thou claimest it as thine, lo! here it is. I will not keep that which belongs of right to thee."

"Right well hast thou spoken, Edric, but thou hast not replied. I asked thee frankly who it was from whom thou hadst this dagger. Wilt thou, or canst thou, answer? If not, is there a warrior present who can tell King Olaf who gave this dagger to Edric, the son of Sigvard Eirikson?"

Edric was silent. Then uprose, at the bottom of the hall, among the less important warriors, Anders the son of Anders, who exclaimed:

"If the king ask me how that knife was won I may explain. If not, my tongue is dumb."

"That is a curious speech in a king's hall, sir champion. But speech should ever be held free here in the North. Where else, if not? So say thy say and answer me my question: 'Who gave my knife to Edric?'"

"His uncle lost it in striving to destroy the youth."

"What! dost thou mean Ulf Eirikson?"

"I do."

"Then," said the king, "tell how it happened."

The warrior then related what we know already of the struggle, and how the dog had saved his master's life.

"Good!" said King Olaf. "I can understand why Edric would not sell his dog, and why he would not tell his uncle's baseness. Nobles, I honour him. 'Skole' to Yarl Edric, he shall, if it please him, join our force in the approaching war with Knut of Denmark. What says the lad?"

"Sir King, I am most grateful, but it may hardly be that I march with thee—now, at least. I have a mother—best of mothers has she been to me—and my ambition is to make the close of her now solitary pilgrimage more pleasant. Then I have yet another duty."

"What is that?"

"My grandsire is a pagan; my father's lands yield me enough to live on. I would fain take old Eirik to my home at Greendale, and there, if possible, turn him from his pagan thoughts and make a stalwart Christian of him. Surely that conquest is a higher one than killing off Knut's Danes!"

Now this was touching Olaf on a very tender spot, therefore he answered, with some hesitation, "Well, yes—perhaps. But touching thy Uncle Ulf; I have seen nothing of him these ten days past, it seems. Who has seen Ulf Eirikson?"

No one in the great hall had seen him or his ship.

"Edric," said Olaf, "I shame me for the part I played. Thou art an honest fellow, and thy uncle is a rogue, which, seeing he is Eirik's son, is passing strange to me. How can the sons of noble blood be curs? Come, give me thy hand, young man; let us be friends. Keep thou thy dog, and—Hah! who dares disturb the feast?"

It was a messenger, who came in

* £15 English money.



A Viking's Burial.
(Drawn for the B.O.P. by H. Walker.)

haste. He had not halted all night long, and his immediate errand was to warn the king that Knut was arming ships against him, having in his mind the wish to be the King of Denmark, England, Norway, and the Islands, to form of them a Scandinavian realm, where all the kindred races—Norwegians, English, Danes—should form one brotherhood for peace and war.

"I guessed as much, sir messenger. Sit down and drain thy horn; let the feast flow! Harpers, strike up!"

When the evening came the guests arose to go, and with them Edric, who was very glad to see how matters had turned out between him and King Olaf Tryggvason.

It was a lovely evening, and Edric walked along the cliffs surrounding Trondhjem Fjord. He was alone, and as he walked he pondered on all the various changes he had seen already in his life. He walked until he reached the Skaffa Fell, a rock quite on the other side beyond the headland. Here, as he gazed straight down into the water, he felt a sudden blow, and that was all. Downwards he fell. The rock was high and steep—a hundred feet at least from the sharp precipice down to the surface of the water. It happened well for Edric that there was no beach; the wall of rock went down into the water, which was so deep that a modern man-of-war, a first-class line-of-battle ship, had floated there with ease.

His senses taken from him by the blow, Edric knew nothing of what happened until he raised his eyes and found himself surrounded by certain humble peasant-folk in a small shepherd's hut. He lay upon a truss of straw upon the floor, and near him sat his dog—his faithful Njord—whom nothing could induce to leave his master.

It seems a fisherman out sailing in his boat had seen a strange black head upon the water, and, thinking it belonged to a kind of seal, lay in his oars and drifted on towards it. He reached it, and, to his astonishment, found that it did not dive down to escape from sight as seals do generally, but kept on swimming towards him. Very much astonished, he looked over from his boat and saw that the animal supported something else, which proved to be our hero. The wonder of the fisherman was not diminished when he found that the curious animal, instead of being, as he thought, a seal, was a large dog. With difficulty he contrived to haul the rescued youth into his boat, and got the dog in too. At last, however, he succeeded, and brought both of them to his hut, where they were found by Tostig Branderson, the forester or huntsman to the king, whose house was not far off.

The disappearance of our hero had given rise to varied kinds of fear on his account. Three days were spent in searching, but in vain; no trace of him was found until—the fourth day having passed—Tostig walked into the poor shepherd's hut whither our Edric had been taken, and, seeing Njord lying beside his master, broke out in ecstasies of joy.

This finished what the shepherd's care had begun, and Edric's health improved with great rapidity. The forester sent word to Thorfinn and the

rest who were about to sail, much to the indignation of "little" Nils, who, having been removed to serve on board the Sleipner, saw very little of his friend and foster-brother. But all the little squadron were delighted to hear of Edric's safety, and everybody spoke in praise of Njord the wonder-dog.

But Ulf could not be found. Olaf had, with his usual promptitude, declared that he alone could be the intending murderer. His ship was gone, no trace of her remained. Therefore, the king sent back the viking Hjalmar, with orders to demand the body of the murderer Ulf, and to produce him, living or dead, at Trondhjem, in the space of five weeks at the latest. Nils was permitted to enroll himself in Olaf's service.

With kind expressions of goodwill on both sides, Thorfinn and his company now left the court of Olaf, and, with favourable winds, reached Reykiavik eight days after.

Here their reception was most brilliant. The great success achieved by their attempt at trading set all the island in a fever of excitement to go on similar adventures. When, in the course of talk in the great hall at Reykiavik, Thorfinn told Magni how the dog had twice saved Edric's life, and how the King of Norway asked the good folks of Iceland to give up Ulf to justice, Magni replied,

"Of course we will, and gladly. The rascal came back home a week ago with an account of Edric's death, and claiming Greendale as his own in consequence. We, to gain time, would not allow the suit to come before the ting until ye should return with proofs of what he stated. I shall now send for him, confront him with his nephew, and act accordingly. One thing we ought to do. As formerly our heroes received rewards of bracelets, gorgets, rings, upon their ships and shields, and so forth, I propose that Njord receive a golden collar with his name engraved thereon, telling the world the deeds by which he saved his master."

This suggestion was received with great applause. A meeting was convened to meet in three days' time to try the cause of Ulf and Edric, before the former should be given up to Hjalmar.

When the time came, the various chiefs and yarls, living about the town of Reykiavik, assembled for the trial. But the preceding day had been unpleasant. The air was stormy, and beyond all that, strange rumblings shook the earth—even at Reykiavik. A cloud was seen to rise from where Mount Hecla stood, and on the lower portion there was a lurid glow, being the reflection of the molten mass beneath. Hecla was in irruption.

Yet, as duty called these men, they met at Magni's as unconcernedly as though no great convulsion of internal nature had occurred.

They met in solemn order in the tingstead, near the town. Edric was there with Thorfinn, Anders Andersson, and all the men forming the crews. Magni took his place and called on Ulf to come and answer to the charges brought against him by the chieftain Thorfinn, of attempted murder and

other foul misconduct. But there was no reply. The messengers sent out returned, and said he was in no part of the district where they had right of search. So, in his absence, evidence was heard, and he was sentenced to be given up to Olaf Tryggvason to deal with as he pleased. Further, that all the lands and goods of Sigvald Eirikson should be decreed the property of Edric, to be disposed of at his will. Then came a vote of thanks to Olaf, for his kind reception of the squadron under Thorfinn.

More business was now transacted, and then the cloud of smoke that hung above Mount Hecla appeared to thicken and become more lurid-red than ever.

The ting broke up. Some of the members rode away towards the mountain, undismayed by the unearthly noises that increased as they went on.

A south-east wind sprang up and bore the smoke away from them, which else had very seriously hindered them. They stopped two nights upon the road and came to where the troll, Freydisa's grandmother, once had her dwelling. As now Freydisa lived here in her banishment, the tingsmen thought they might as well ask her whether she knew of Ulf, and where he hid.

They rode up to the house which Thassi formerly had entered to ask old Unna's aid. They found the court a mass of lava, dust, and ashes. The horses, snorting, reared, and would not enter. One of the men dismounted, and binding his two leathern saddle-bags over his feet to shield them from the still hot ashes, walked boldly to the door. He knocks in vain. He tries to enter, but something mocks his strength. He then mounts on the roof, and, going to the hole left for the passage of the smoke, jumps down.

What does he find

The portion of the house exposed to the north-west wind had been attacked by the fierce stream of rolling lava—part of the wall had given way, but not so as to throw the roof down, and through this passage the molten mass had oozed. The body of a man lay near the door, which he had evidently tried to open, but, as it opened inwardly, the rolling lava had prevented him from doing this. Not far from this two other persons lay quite dead—Freydisa and Geirrida. They had been most likely suffocated by the dust and then borne down by lava, for the heads alone were visible!

* * *

But let us leave this scene of horrors and pass to Greenland. Another spring is blooming. Winter has come and gone since last we wrote of Iceland. A tall young fellow in a dark-blue tunic is walking near the cliff at Eirik's Fjord. Upon his arm there leans a tall old man who must have once possessed gigantic strength.

"Lead me up yonder, Edric. I would gladly see the waves beat on the headland where I soon shall sleep. See to my funeral. Let my best armour, sword and spear, shield, bracelets, comb, and other things be placed there with me. And let my grave mound be as near the waves as may be, their roar will still be pleasant to the shade within."

"Dear Eirik Thorwaldson, talk not like this. Thou art not ailing; God

has given thee strength beyond the ordinary limits of our kind. He will not take thee ere thy time be come, and there is not a sign of breaking in thy limbs."

"My son, the gods I serve are passing

"What a strange fancy, Edric! Do thy priests talk thus?"

"They tell us most delightful things, but thou hast ever sternly checked them when they spoke to thee. They teach that when the spirit, weary with its

See just a footstep further, and thou must acknowledge that if they be what men have called them—*gods*—they cannot change. Our God is changeless—good and true to all eternity."

"I like to hear thee speak, boy. There



"Lead me up yonder, Edric."

to their twilight, as has been foretold. Where smoke their altars? Nowhere in the North. I am the last, the very last, of Odin's champions, and I shame me that my hand is weak, for he will need us in that dreadful day."

"Dear father—for thou hast been one to me—does not the falling off of mere brute strength show that it is not wanted at the end? Thy mind is clear, thy love to me is warm. Does not this prove that love is more than strength?"

labours, pants for the peace on high, He who is Love itself says, *Come—Come ye who are weary and are heavy-laden—come to Me!*"

"Who says this, Edric?"

"The Christian God."

"The meek, white Christ, who bore such blows with patience, is not the God to welcome me."

"He says that 'whoso comes to Him He will in no wise cast out.' Father, thou canst feel thy gods are *waning*.

is within thine eye a fire that tells me more than words. I never listened to thy faith before, but ere I cut the runes upon my breast, and bleed away to Odin, I will talk to thee again. I like thy speech. Now tell me of thy mother."

Edric had tact enough to change the subject, and not to press the old man home; therefore he told him how he lived at Greendale, and how the old house looked.

"Mother's dear hands make all things

look so bright, we are so happy in our little home, and—and—many things conspire to make us happy.”

“Before I cut the runes upon my breast I’ll see thy mother. She is very good.”

He did not “cut the runes upon his breast.” He lived two years after this conversation. He built a church near to the home which we have once described; and near it, some years after, a Christian grave, with crosses at the

head and feet, marked the last resting-place of—Odin’s champion? No; of a meek and holy convert to the faith of Peace.

(THE END.)

THE MASTER OF THE SHELL:

A PUBLIC SCHOOL STORY.

BY TALBOT BAINES REED,

Author of “A Dog with a Bad Name,” “The Fifth Form at St. Dominic’s,” etc., etc.

CHAPTER X.—THE DOCTOR HAS A WORD OR TWO WITH RAILSFORD’S HOUSE.

RAILSFORD’S house was not famous for early risers. The chapel bell in winter began to ring at 7.30, and “call-over” was at 7.45. Between these two periods, but chiefly at the 7.45 end, most of the rising in the house was accomplished.

A few there were who, even in the winter, preferred to occupy half an hour over their toilets, and one or two—Ainger of the Sixth, to wit, and Wignet of the Fifth, *who shaved*!—were reported to shake off dull sloth and apply themselves to their arduous tasks a good hour before “call-over.”

It certainly was not an appointment with the razor which awoke Master Simson, the Shellfish, at the unearthly hour of six on the morning of which we are speaking. His infantine cheek was guiltless even of the down which to some boys affords so exquisite a fore-taste of coming glories. Nor had Simson an imposition to summon him from his innocent couch; for the fifty lines he had received yesterday for being found in the kitchen taking a lesson in the manufacture of mince-pies had been punctually copied out before he went to bed.

The fact was, Simson was in for the hundred yards under fourteen at the Sports; and, being a shy youth who did not like to practise in public, he had determined to rise before the lark and take a furtive spin round the school track while his schoolfellows and enemies slept.

It was a cold, raw morning, and before he was fully arrayed in his flannels he had had more than one serious idea of relapsing into bed. Be it said to his credit, he resisted the temptation, and gallantly finished his toilet, putting on an extra “sweater” and pea-jacket to boot—for he had seven pounds to run off between now and the Sports. He peered out of the window; it was dark, but a patter on the panes showed him that a light sleet was falling outside. If so, being of a frugal mind, he would not run in his new shoes, but in his old boots.

Now his old boots were in the cupboard under the staircase by the front door. And the reader understands at last why it is I have taken so much trouble to describe Master Simson’s movements on this particular morning.

It was so rare an event for any boy to be up at six o’clock on a winter morning in Railsford’s, that no one had ever thought about making a rule to prevent the early birds leaving the house at that

hour, if they could succeed in getting out. Simson, who had interest with the cook, believed he could get an *excuse* through the kitchen window; meanwhile he must get his boots.

He armed himself with a match—the last one in the box—and quietly felt his way along the corridor and down the stairs. There was a glimmer of light from under the maids’ door as he passed, which told him they were up and that he would not have long to wait downstairs.

At the foot of the stairs he turned sharp round, and, following the wall with his hand, came at length on the familiar handle of the “boot-box.” To his surprise the door was locked, but the key was on the outside.

“A sell if I hadn’t been able to get in,” said he to himself, opening the door.

Now Simson, like a cautious youth, aware of the frailty of matches, wisely resolved to penetrate as far as possible into the interior of the cupboard, in the direction in which he knew his particular boots to be, before striking a light.

But at the first step he tripped on something and fell prostrate over a human carcass, which emitted a muffled gasp and moved heavily as he tumbled upon it.

Then there went up a yell such as curdled the blood of half Railsford’s as they lay in their beds, and made the domestics upstairs cling to one another in terror, as if their last moment had come.

Simson, with every hair on his head erect, made a frantic dive out of that awful den, banging the door and locking it behind him in a frenzy of fright. Then he dashed upstairs, and plunged, as white as his shirt, into the dormitory.

Another yell signalled his arrival. Not his, this time, but the joint performance of the other occupants of the room, who, sitting up with their chins on their knees, half petrified by the horror of the first shriek, now gave themselves up for lost when the door broke open in the dark, and a gasping something staggered into the room.

“Oh!” gasped Simson, in response to this tragic reception.

“Who’s that?” cried the voice of the baronet, in a falsetto of agitation.

“Me—Simson—such a frightful thing, I say.”

“What? Strike a light, you young ass,” cried Arthur, whose presence of

mind returned directly Simson declared his identity.

Simson struck his only match; but he was trembling so much that it went out before he could reach the candle.

“It’s out. I say, you fellows—”

“What have you got all your togs on for?” asked Sir Digby, who had caught a momentary glimpse of his comrade’s get-up.

“There’s some—bo—dy been murdered,” gasped Simson, “in the bo—ot-box!”

Everybody was on his feet in a moment.

“Murdered?”

“Yes,” said Simson, wonderfully comforted by the noise and general panic. “I got up early, you know, to have a grind on the track, and went to get my boots, and—I—I fell over it!”

“Over what?”

“The bo—od—y,” whispered Simson.

“Has anybody got a light?” shouted Arthur.

But at that moment a light appeared at the door, and Ainger came in.

“What’s all this row—what’s the matter?”

“Simson says somebody’s been murdered in the boot-box,” replied Arthur. “I say, hadn’t we better go and see?”

It was a practical suggestion. The corridor was already full of half-dressed inquirers, and a moment later Mr. Railsford’s door opened.

The story was repeated to him.

“Come with me, Ainger,” said he, quietly; “the rest of you return to your dormitories, and remain there.”

Arthur, seized by a noble desire not to leave his future kinsman unprotected in such an hour of peril, elected to disregard this last order, and, accompanied by his henchman, followed the candle at a respectful distance down the stairs.

“There’s no blood on the stairs,” observed the baronet, in a whisper.

“They’ve left the key in the door,” muttered Arthur.

“Hold the light,” said Railsford, turning the key, and entering.

The listeners outside heard an exclamation of horror, followed almost immediately by one of astonishment.

It was more than human nature to hold out, and they boldly abandoned their incognito, and entered the cupboard.

Prostrate on the ground, bound hand and foot, and enveloped down to the

waist in a sack, lay the figure of a man, motionless, but certainly not dead, for sounds proceeded from the depths of the canvas.

In a moment Railsford had knelt and cut the cords round the prisoner's feet and hands, while Ainger drew the sack from the head.

Arthur gave a whistle of consternation as the features of Mr. Bickers came to light, pale and stern.

The sudden sight of Medusa's head could hardly have had a more petrifying effect. The victim himself was the first to recover. Stretching his arms and legs in relief, he sat up, and coolly said, "Thank you."

"Whatever does all this mean?" ex-

Railsford retired to his room and threw himself into his chair in a state of profound dejection. Mysterious as the whole affair was, one or two things were clear. The one was that his house was disgraced by this criminal and cowardly outrage, the other was that the situation was made ten times more difficult on account of the already notorious feud between himself and the injured master.

His high hopes were once more dashed to the ground, and this time, it almost seemed, finally.

Mark Railsford was no coward, yet for half an hour that morning he wished he might be well out of Grandcourt for ever. Then, having admitted cooler

counsels, he dressed and went to the captain's study.

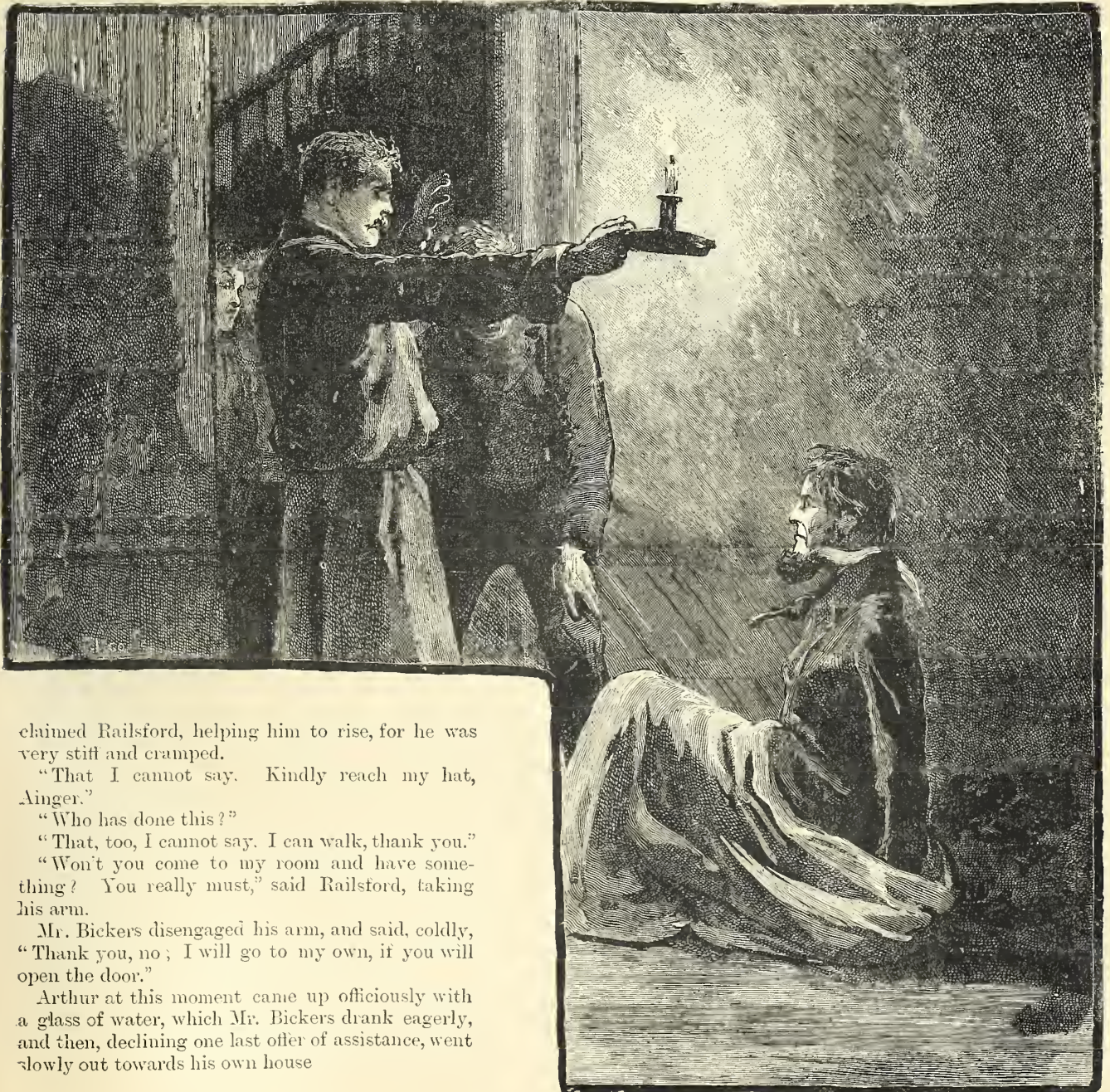
"Call the other prefects here, Ainger. I want to talk to you."

The seniors were not far off, and speedily assembled.

"First of all," said the master, who perceived at a glance that it was not necessary for him to explain the gravity of the situation, "can any of you give me any information about this disgraceful affair?"

"None, sir," said Ainger, a little nettled at the master's tone; "we have talked it over, and, as far as we are concerned, it's a complete mystery."

"Have you any reason to suspect anybody?"



claimed Railsford, helping him to rise, for he was very stiff and cramped.

"That I cannot say. Kindly reach my hat, Ainger."

"Who has done this?"

"That, too, I cannot say. I can walk, thank you."

"Won't you come to my room and have something? You really must," said Railsford, taking his arm.

Mr. Bickers disengaged his arm, and said, coldly, "Thank you, no; I will go to my own, if you will open the door."

Arthur at this moment came up officiously with a glass of water, which Mr. Bickers drank eagerly, and then, declining one last offer of assistance, went slowly out towards his own house

"Prostrate on the ground lay the figure of a man."

"None at all, sir."

"You know, all of you, I needn't tell you, that the credit of the house is at stake—in fact, it's gone till we find the offenders. Mr. Bickers will naturally report the matter to Dr. Ponsford, and I am going to the Doctor for the same purpose. I wished to consult you before taking any step, because this is a matter in which we must work together."

"Certainly, sir," said Ainger, speaking for the rest.

"What I mean is, that no personal feeling must come between us and the duty we all owe to Grandcourt to see this wrong put right; you understand me?"

"Yes," said the downright Ainger; "we none of us like Mr. Bickers, but we must find out the fellows who scragged him, all the same."

"Exactly; and I am glad to hear you say that. There is one other matter. Two of you, Stafford and Felgate, recently felt specially aggrieved by something which Mr. Bickers said to you. You must forget all that now, and remember only that your duty to the whole school requires that you should do everything in your power to help to put an end to this scandal."

"Of course we shall," said Felgate, curtly, in a tone which Railsford did not consider particularly encouraging.

However, having opened his mind to his lieutenants, he went away straight to the Doctor's.

Mr. Bickers was leaving just as he entered, and Railsford read in his looks, as he brushed past, no great encouragement to hope that things would soon be made right.

"Mr. Bickers," said he, advancing almost in front of his colleague, "I *must* tell you how distressed I am at what has occurred. I—"

"Yes, it *is* trying for you," said the injured master, drily. "Excuse me, though, I want my breakfast."

It was not easy to feel cordial sympathy with a man like this. However, there was nothing for it but to go and lay his case before the Doctor, and Railsford entered accordingly.

Dr. Ponsford was at breakfast, and asked his visitor to take a seat.

"You have come to tell me that Mr. Bickers's assailants are discovered?" said he.

"I wish I could," said Railsford. "I have only had time to speak to my prefects."

"Two of whom are not to be trusted, and profess a personal spite against Mr. Bickers."

This was just like the Doctor. He gave other people information and never wanted any himself.

"I know, of course, what you refer to. I have not myself found any reason to consider Felgate or Stafford untrustworthy. Mr. Bickers says—"

"I know what Mr. Bickers says; but what do you say?"

"Well, sir, frankly, I do not feel quite sure of Felgate; and Stafford is too amiable to say 'no' to anybody."

"Now, let me hear about the affair this morning."

Railsford gave a careful account of the discovery of Mr. Bickers in the boot-box, and was conscious that the Doctor, although he gave little sign of

it, was not quite blind to the unfortunate position in which he, as the new master of the offending house, was placed.

"Have a call-over of your house at ten o'clock, Mr. Railsford. I will come."

This announcement was about as cheerful a one in Grandcourt as an appointment made by the Court of the Inquisition would have been, once upon a time, in Spain. Railsford rose to go.

"You had better stop and have breakfast here," said the Doctor, ringing the bell for another cup.

During the meal no further reference was made to the event of the morning, but Railsford was drawn out as to his work and the condition of his house generally, and was painfully aware that the Doctor was making the best of his time to "reckon him up." He only wished he could guess the verdict. But on this point he received no light, and went off presently charged with the unpleasant task of summoning his house to answer for themselves at the bar of the head master.

Meanwhile the excitement in the house had by no means abated. Breakfast had been a movable feast. Fellows, cup and saucer in hand, had hovered about from study to study gossiping about the affair, and exchanging conjectures, and even wagers, as to the culprits. Arthur and the Baronet found themselves in the heyday of popularity and importance. They had been "in it." They had seen Bickers pulled out of the sack, Arthur had got him a glass of water, and the Baronet had secured a bit of the identical cord which had bound the victim's feet, and which the new possessor now proudly displayed as a watch-chain.

These two astute managers, moreover, had had the presence of mind to capture Simson early in the morning, and incorporate him, story and all, into their own business. An immense prestige cropped up for their benefit. Even Wake, of the Fifth, thought it worth his while to come and hear what Hera-path had to say; while among the juniors it was confidently rumoured that he and the Baronet knew all about the affair, and could put their fingers on the culprits. Only, being loyal men, they would not.

As to the prefects, they were divided among themselves. Felgate openly gloried in the retribution which had fallen on the author of his recent humiliation, and Stafford would perhaps have joined him had not Ainger's black looks warned him in time to adhere to the party of law and order. Barnworth, as usual on such occasions, trifled and made little jokes and yawned.

Presently the fateful summons went round, "Call-over at ten in the common room by the Doctor!"

Fellows whistled with consternation as they heard the news.

"I say, there's a big row on *now*!" said the Baronet, half delighted at the prospect of some excitement to break the dull term, but not quite sure whether what was coming was to be all sport.

It was a curious spectacle, the crowd of boys which assembled in the common

room that morning at Railsford's. Some were sulky, and resented this jumbling of the innocent and guilty. Some were so anxious to appear guileless and gay, that they overdid it and compromised themselves in consequence. Some were a little frightened lest an all-round flogging should be proposed. Some whispered mysteriously, and looked askance at one or two fellows who had been "mentioned" as possibly complicated. Some, like Arthur and the Baronet, with Simson squeezed in between them, looked knowing and important, as though horses and chariots would not drag their secret out of them. Ainger looked pale, and his big chest went up and down in a manner which those who knew him felt to be ominous. Stafford looked alternately solemn and sneering, according as he turned to the captain or Felgate. And Barnworth alone looked comfortable, and, apparently, had not an idea what all the excitement was about.

At ten o'clock Railsford entered in his cap and gown, and Ainger immediately began to call over the roll. Every one answered to his name except Maple of the Shell, who was away at his father's funeral, and Tomkins the "Baby," who had been so scared by the whole affair, that he had turned sick during breakfast, and retired—with the Dame's permission—to bed.

During the call-over the Doctor had entered and seated himself at the master's desk. His quick eye took in each boy as he uttered his "adsum," dwelling longer on some than on others, and now and then turning his glance to the master and senior prefect. When it was all over and Ainger had handed in the list, the head master took his eyeglass from his eye, laid the list on the desk before him, and said,

"Boys, this is an unusual and unpleasant visit. You know the object of it; you know the discredit which at present lies on your house and on Grandcourt, and you know what your duty is in the matter. If any boy here does not know what I mean, let him stand up."

It was as much as the life of anybody present was worth to respond to this challenge.

One or two who could never hear a good story too often would not have objected if somebody else had demanded further information. But for their own part, their discretion outdid their curiosity, and they retained their seats amidst a dead silence.

"Very well. Now I will put a question to you as a body. It is a very serious question, and one which no honest boy here, if he is able to answer it, can afford to evade. A great deal more depends on your answer than the mere expulsion of one or more wrongdoers. You boys are the guardians of the honour of your house. The only honourable thing at a time like this is to speak the truth, whatever the consequences. The question I ask is this—Was any boy here concerned in the outrage on Mr. Bickers? or does any boy know who was? I will wait for two minutes, that you may understand the importance of the question, before I call for an answer."

Dead silence. The boys for the most

part looked straight before them with heightened colour, and watched the slow progress of the minute-hand of the clock.

"I repeat the question now," said the Doctor, when the allotted time had run—"Was any boy here concerned in the outrage on Mr. Bickers? or does any boy know who was? If so, let him stand up."

The silence which followed was broken to some by the thumping of their own hearts. But no one rose; and a sense of relief came to all but Railsford, who felt his spirits sink as the prospect of a near end to his trouble receded.

"Every boy here," said the Doctor, slowly, "denies all knowledge of the affair?"

Silence gave consent.

"Then," continued the head master, more severely, putting up his eyeglass, and handing the list to Ainger, "I shall put the question to each boy separately. Call over the list, and let each boy come up and answer."

Ainger began by calling out his own name, and forthwith walked up to the master's desk.

"Do you know anything whatever of this affair?" asked the Doctor, looking him full in the face.

"No, sir," said Ainger, returning the look, after his fashion, half defiantly.

The next name was called, and its owner marched up to the desk and uttered his denial.

Railsford, as he stood scanning keenly the face of each boy in turn, felt that he was watching the action of some strange machine. First Ainger's clear voice. Then the short "adsum," and the footsteps up to the desk. Then the Doctor's stern question. Then the quick lookup and the half-defiant "No, sir" (for they all caught up the captain's tone). And, finally, the retreating

footsteps, and the silence preceding the next name.

There was no sign of faltering; and, wherever the secret lurked, Railsford saw little chance of it leaking out. A few boys, indeed, as was natural, gave their replies after their own fashion. Barnworth looked bored, and answered as though the whole performance was a waste of time. Arthur Hearnpath was particularly knowing in his tone, and accompanied his disclaimer with an embarrassing half-wink at his future kinsman. Felgate said "No" without the "sir," and swaggered back to his place with an ostentatious indifference which did not go unnoticed. The Baronet, who was nothing if not original, said nothing, but shook his head.

"Reply to the question, sir!" thundered the Doctor, ominously.

Whereat Sir Digby, losing his head, said, "No, thank you, sir," and retired, amid some confusion.

Sinson, when interrogated, mildly added to his "No, sir" the explanatory sentence, "except finding him there when I went for my boots;" and Munger, the cad, added to his answer, "but I'll try to find out," with a leer and an oily smile, which Ainger felt strongly tempted to acknowledge by a kick as he passed back to his place. Stafford, painfully aware that he was one of the "mentioned" ones, looked horribly confused and red as he answered to his name, and satisfied several of the inexperienced ones present that it was hardly necessary to look further for one of the culprits.

So the call-over passed, and when once more Ainger handed in the list Railsford seemed further than ever from seeing light through the cloud which enveloped it.

The Doctor's brow darkened as he once more took his glass from his eye.

"This is very serious," said he, slowly. "When I came here it was with the painful feeling that the house contained boys so cowardly and unprincipled as to waylay a defenceless man in the dark, and to treat him as Mr. Bickers has been treated. But it is tenfold worse to believe that it contains boys cowardly enough to involve the whole house in their own disgrace and punishment. (Sensation.) I will not mince matters. Your house is deeply disgraced, and cannot pretend to rank any longer with the other houses, who at least have a good name, until you have yourselves made this matter right. It rests with you to retrieve your credit. Meanwhile—"

Everybody took a long breath. The occasion was as when the judge puts on the black cap before passing sentence of death.

"Meanwhile the house will cease to dine in Hall, but will dine in this room at one o'clock daily; and on Saturdays, instead of taking the half-holiday in the afternoon, you will take it in the morning, and assemble for school at twelve o'clock. I still trust that there may be sufficient self-respect among you to make this change only of slight duration; or that—" and here the Doctor's tone grew bitter, and his mouth gathered sarcastically—"at least self-interest may come to your assistance and make it possible to return to the old order."

And he stalked from the room.

"Let us off easy, eh?" said the Baronet.

"Easy?" fumed Arthur; "he might as well have given us a bit of rope apiece and told us to go and hang ourselves! Look at Ainger; do you suppose *he* thinks we've been let off easy?"

The captain's face left no doubt on that question.

(To be continued.)

THE DEATH OF JULIUS CÆSAR.

(See Coloured Plate presented with Monthly Part.)

WITH this month's part we continue our series of Roman scenes, and present our readers with a copy of Gérôme's great picture of the death of Julius Cæsar. Such pictures do more than volumes of description to make clear what manner of men the Romans were, and amid what surroundings they lived. This one shows us the interior of the Capitol, with its rich columns and tessellated floor, and curved rows of benches, and the crowd of white-robed senators moving off in enthusiasm, brandishing the blood-stained daggers with which the greatest man that Rome produced has been cruelly stabbed to death. Brutus is looking towards us, Cassius has his back to us, and the smaller men are thronging out through the doorway, shouting in chorals the "Liberty, Freedom, and Emancipation!" with which for an hour or so they satisfied their countrymen, and which the French Republicans afterwards appropriated as "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity."

Cæsar was admittedly the greatest of the Romans. He it was who saved the corrupt Republic from dissolution, and in founding the Empire gave Rome the shape in which it most influenced the world. As citizen, orator, author, general, statesman, and

politician, he was "the noblest Roman of them all;" and in all, candour compels us to say, there was considerable room for improvement.

Cæsar is better known than loved amongst schoolboys from his Commentaries having unhappily been chosen as a subject for constraining experiments. His literary powers are not as appreciated as they might be, owing to his works having to be studied in paragraphs. Many boys are apt to wish that De Bello Gallico, like several other of his productions, had been destroyed by Augustus as "unfit for publication." But after the toilsome course from Nepos upwards has been traversed, there are few who will not confess that Cæsar was "the most interesting after all"—as, in truth, he was!

He, Cæsar, has the credit of beginning most Histories of England. The honour is somewhat undeserved. We have mention of Britain in 200 B.C., a century before he was born, and we have an exploring expedition even into the Arctic circle of which he never makes mention. And among the Britons, when he did come, he did little. He was not like Claudius, who captured Colchester at the head of elephants clad in mail, bearing turrets full of slingers, and,

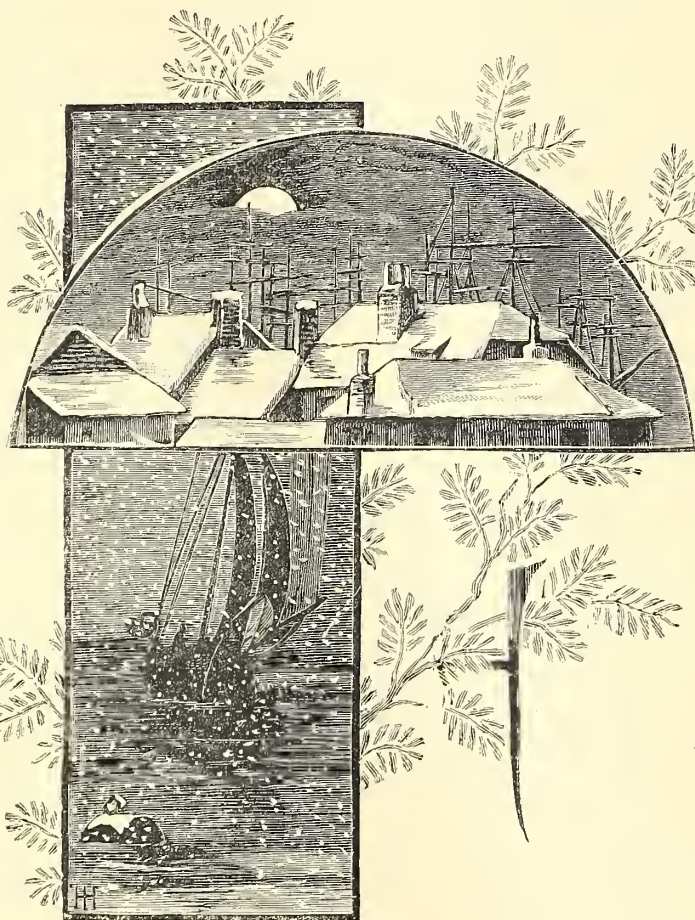
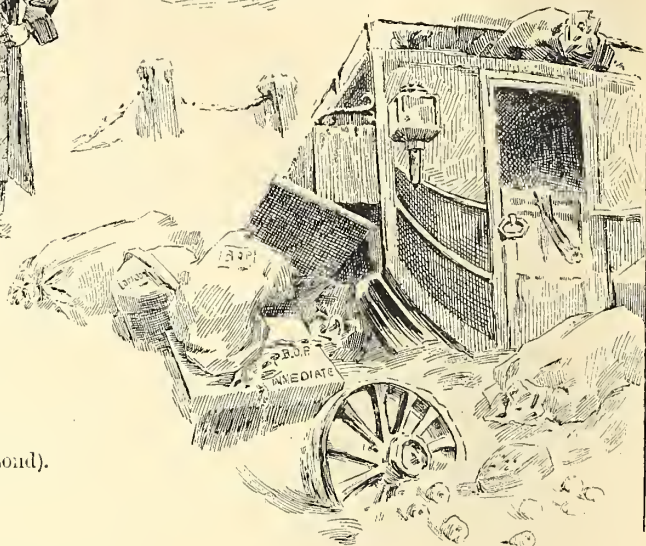
backed by the pikemen of Belgium and the troopers from the Rhine, won a really great and lasting victory. How strangely history repeats itself in unlikely places! It was Claudius who had the first Wild West Show! And the Wild West Show was Britain! When he returned to Rome the emperor amused his people with an entertainment in the style of Buffalo Bill. The Field of Mars was the West Brompton of the day. Where that famous plain was bounded by water on three sides, a fortress was built in imitation of the walls and stockades of Camolodunum, and the Roman public were admitted free to see the great attack on the thatched palaces and streets of wattle huts that with this fort did duty for old Colchester. The thousands of captives brought from Britain were driven into the arena, some as defenders, some as attackers, and forced to fight each other. In the arrangements good care was taken that the defenders should be in a minority, so that this wild drama of butchery terminated with the capture and burning of the fortress, the advance of the legionaries, and the triumph of all-conquering Rome. "Rule Britannia!" Oh, no; certainly not! "Ave Cæsar et, etc.," as *per doctos*. [But



THE SCHOOL BELL.

SONG FOR BOYS.

Words and Music by the Rev. W. J. FOXELL, B.A., B.MUS. (Lond).



VOICE. *Fast.*

PIANO. *Fast. p* *cres.*

CHORUS. *f*

1. Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding!
2. Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding!

f

SOLO. *f*

Oh, how dis-mal 'tis to hear the school-bell ring. At
Oh, how dreadful 'tis to hear the school bell ring. At

p *f*

CHORUS. Ding, ding!

CHORUS. Ding, ding!

six on a win-ter's morn, When windowssbake with the storm, To turn out of bed with a
nine or at half-past two, You feel un-commonly blue, When you've rash-ly dar'd, with your

CHORUS.

cold in your head, You wish you had nev - er been born! . . . Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding!
 work unprepared, To face what you'll cer-tainly rue . . . Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding!
 Oh, how dismal 'tis to hear the
 Oh, how dreadful 'tis to hear the

f *p*

CHORUS. *f*

school - bell ring. Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding!
 school - bell ring.

f

SOLO. CHORUS. Ding, ding!

Oh, how jol - ly 'tis to hear the school - bell ring. 3. At twelve or at half - past four, When trou - bles all are

f *mf*

CHORUS. Ding, ding!

er; Your heart free and light, and your eyes glad and bright, You make for the wide open door . . . You make for the wide o - pen

CHORUS. *ff*

door. Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding! Oh, how jol - ly 'tis to hear the school-bell ring.

f *ff*



But though Julius Caesar's expeditions to Britain were too much like those of the French to Madagascar to be called successes, yet they were almost his only failures, as any careful consideration of his career will show. He was born on the 12th of July, B.C. 100, the month of July being so named on account of his having been born in it, just as August is now called from Augustus having died in it. He was the son of Caius Julius, Caesar and Aurelia, his aunt was the wife of Marius, and when he was seventeen he married Cornelia, the daughter of Cinna. He thus belonged by birth and marriage to the Marian faction and suffered much from Sulla's enmity. At the time of his marriage he was a priest of Jupiter, but of this office Sulla deprived him, and he also stripped him of his wife's dowry and drove him into exile, none of which things were forgotten.

Caesar first saw active service under Thermus at Mitylene in B.C. 80, and then joined Servilius in his campaign in Cilicia. On Sulla's death he returned to Rome, failed in an attempt to impeach Dolabella, and then retired to Rhodes to study oratory under Apollonius. It was not till B.C. 61, when he was forty years old, that he received an important command, though he had been well prepared for it by service as military tribune, as quaestor in Spain, as aedile, and as pontifex maximus, the head of the State religion.

In the year 60 he was in Southern Spain prætor, and thence he came to Rome to canvass for the Consulship. In the year 58 he entered on his first campaign in Gaul, in which, at Autun, he defeated the Celtic tribe of Helvetii, who were leaving Switzerland with a view of settling on the Atlantic coast, the Roman objection to the movement being that if the Helvetii left their country empty the Germans would occupy it; and Germans on the frontier meant difficulty for Rome. Meanwhile the Germans, under a chief whom Caesar calls Ariovistus, had crossed the Rhine and invaded Gaul, and had to be driven back if there was to be peace in the Roman province. At Mülhausen the battle was fought, the Germans defeated and forced across the Rhine. Next year the north-eastern frontier of Gaul was threatened by the Belgic Confederacy, and ended in Caesar's triumph, although on the Sambre the Nervii attacked his camp as it was forming and drove off his cavalry and auxiliaries, and it was only by the narrowest chance that the Romans were not annihilated. Next year Caesar was warring in Brittany with the tribes round Vannes, whom he in consequence calls the Veneti, and whom he defeated on land and sea. Next year the Germans again crossed the Rhine. Caesar treacherously took their chiefs prisoners at a conference, and at the same time attacked the army and defeated it with great slaughter, driving it across the river, and spending eighteen days on German ground. Having crossed the Rhine, he next resolved to cross the Channel and chastise the Britons, who had helped the Veneti. From the Gaulish merchants who traded to the island he could get no information concerning it; Volusenus, whom he sent to reconnoitre, did not dare to land; and Caesar had to start on his first expedition very much in the dark. Where he started from and where he landed on that eventful 25th of August, B.C. 55, is a matter of dispute to this day. He had with him the seventh and tenth legions in some eighty ships, and he took ten hours getting across, probably from Wissant to Ebbsfleet; or, to be quite safe and not to hurt any antiquary's feelings, let us say from somewhere to somewhere. There was a fight as he landed on the shore, there was a storm

which blew the cavalry back to Gaul, there were constant attacks on the Romans, and at the end of three weeks Caesar put the best face he could on his failure and returned. The 55 expedition was what the military call a "reconnaissance in force"—that is to say, it was a serious attack that did not succeed.

Next year Caesar did his best to repair his mistake. He came with a fleet of eight hundred vessels and some forty thousand men to the same place as before. He remained here about forty-five days, and then with all his army paddled away. During this six-and-half weeks he fought several battles, and, according to his own account, won them all; but the attack in all cases came from the Britons. Where these battles were fought is a thorny subject, on which the less said the better. Caesar did not shine as a geographer, and his description of Britain is about as trustworthy as that of the intelligent foreigner in the present day. According to the accepted version, he landed in Pegwell Bay, and marched along the old British road on the south bank of the Thames to Weybridge. This version brings him up the Old Kent Road, across to Clapham Common, down Battersea Rise, over Wimbledon Common, through Esher to St. George's Hill, where his camp is still shown. Next morning he is said to have crossed the Thames at Cowey Stakes—which some cruel objector says were stuck in the wrong way for defence, and merely formed a fish weir—and then struck northwards for St. Albans, where he defeated Cassibelan. This seems rather a roundabout way of conquering Britain; but it should be remembered that in those days the Thames was a wide marsh and not a well-defined river, as it is now. On the other hand it is possible to make out that Caesar never saw the main Thames at all, but only its branch, the Medway, and that the Roman invasion of 54 was entirely confined to the county of Kent. There can be little doubt that in the pitched battles the Romans were victorious, and that Caesar returned to Gaul with a number of captives and a certain amount of tribute in gold coins, whose discovery of late years has completely revolutionised our ideas of the so-called uncivilised Britons. It is a significant fact that when Caesar returned to Gaul he found that country in revolt, inspired to action by his non-success against the Germans and the British; and that it was ninety-seven years before another Roman expedition troubled the shores of Britain.

In 53 Caesar had sixty thousand legionaries under his command in Gaul, and found full employment for them. He led another expedition over the Rhine, but the Germans played a waiting game, and the Romans found retreat the better policy. Next year all Gaul was ablaze again, and he met his toughest antagonist in Vercingetorix, whom he starved out at Alesia, now known as Alise, some thirty miles north-west of Dijon. The siege of Alesia is the most interesting episode in the Gallic wars. In 51 Caesar fought his eighth and last campaign in Gaul, as described in Hirtius's continuation of the Commentaries, and at last gave Gaul "the solitude which they call a peace," as the enterprising Scotchman said of whom we read in Tacitus.

Henceforth Caesar's career forms part of the main thread of the history of Rome, on which we need not here dwell. In January, 49, he crossed the Rubicon, and began his campaign for mastery against Ptolemy, which ended in the victory of Pharsalus. On his return he was made Dictator for life, and on the 15th of March, B.C. 44, he was assassinated in the Senate house by the so-called friends of liberty. It is this scene which our artist has depicted.

Those who would realise it cannot do better than turn to the third act of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." The pretence on which the Dictator is approached is to crave immediate freedom of appeal for Publius Cimber.

"Pardon, Caesar," says Cassius; "Caesar, pardon!"

"As low as to thy foot doth Cassius fall,
To beg enfranchisement for Publius Cimber."

To which Caesar replies in the splendid speech:

"I could be well moved, if I were as you:
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me:
But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fixed, and resting quality,
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks,
They are all fire, and every one doth shine;
But there's but one in all doth hold his place:
So, in the world; 'tis furnished well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
Yet, in the number, I do know but one
That, unassailable, holds on his rank,
Unshaken of motion; and, that I am he,
Let me a little show it, even in this;
That I was constant, Cimber should be banished,
And constant do remain to keep him so."

Quickly the conspirators gather round.
"Oh, Caesar," says Cinna, but Caesar cuts him short with

"Hence! Wilt thou lift up Olympus?"

"Great Caesar," says Decius, as the hands are feeling for the knives in the togas.

"Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?" asks the victim.

Then Casca gives the signal—
"Speak, hands, for me!"
And he fiercely stabs Caesar in the neck. Caesar catches him by the arm, and as he does so is stabbed by all the rest, by Brutus last of all. As Caesar sees him withdraw the dagger he says,

"Et tu Brute? Then fall, Caesar!"
And the senators run off as he drops to the ground at the foot of Pompey's statue.

"Liberty!" says Cinna. "Freedom!
Tyranny is dead! Run hence, proclaim,
cry it about the streets!"

And Casca joins in—

"Some to the common pulpits, and cry out
"Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!"

And so they did—and much good did it do them!

There are some in these days who find much to admire in the characters of Brutus and Cassius. There are others whose opinion was unmistakably expressed by Dante when he placed in the very centre of the Inferno all the three who did most evil in the world—Brutus, Cassius, and Judas Iscariot!

"That upper spirit,
Who hath worse punishment," so spake my guide,
"Is Judas, he that hath his head within
And piles the feet without. Of th' other two,
Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw
Who hangs, is Brutus; lo! now he doth writhe
And speaks not! Th' other Cassius, that appears
So large of limb. But night now re-ascends,
And it is time for parting. All is seen."



THE WILD EAST.

BY THE REV. C. MERK, OF UPPINGHAM,

Author of "An Ancient Battlefield of Heroes," etc.

(Continued from page 248.)

BUT this life has also its pleasures and entertainments. Every station, however small, has its club. The house, containing a couple of rooms, is furnished by Government. It possesses a small library, a number of papers, chessboards, and a billiard-table. Sometimes on week days it is used as a sort of school; sometimes on Sundays services are held in it. It forms, next to the "gardens," the chief attraction of the place. Every place in India must have its "gardens." A square, some hundred yards in length and breadth, has been hedged about with brambles, which grow remarkably well. It has been laid out in flower-beds, it has been planted over with wild orange or eucalyptus-trees. It is irrigated with water carried by bullocks painfully from a distant well. The plants look limp, faded, and unhappy—but not the people who disport themselves amongst them. In spite of heat and sand, and dust and flies, the residents play tennis with much enthusiasm on ground which was intended to be a lawn, but which has grown as hard and brown as a rock. In the cold weather, at Christmas-time, a large tent is pitched on this ground, when balls and dances are given; and the people are reminded by plum-pudding, holly, and mistletoe, of their distant homes.

The work on the line is in keeping with the general life which I have depicted. It is hard; it is continued; it is most trying. To stand on an engine when the thermometer is at 115 deg. in the shade, and 40 deg. more in the sun, is not enjoyable. The hours are long, eight or ten at a stretch. Needless to say, the men suffer a good deal from thirst; and they are quite at a loss sometimes what to drink. The water is brackish and unhealthy; even when it comes from the filter it has a taste as of soft soap. Alcohol drinks in such heat are simply poison.

Alcohol makes a far more rapid and fatal inroad upon European constitutions in India than it does even in England. There were, however, few signs of drunkenness along the line.

The old reproach, that an Englishman was dismissed from his engine, and a Parsee appointed in his stead, because the latter could be always relied upon to be sober, was rarely if ever heard in the Indus valley. The drivers and firemen carried large bottles of weak tea or barley-water with them on the engines. There existed, moreover, the delightful institution of a small white carriage, which was added to the train, and which carried a most valuable store of ice and aerated waters.

The monotony of the journey through the fierce blaze and glare of day or the sultry darkness of night, was occasionally broken by incidents like those of which we read in the Wild West. The line runs through the territory of the Nawab of Bahawalpore. H. Highness is a true Nimrod; he preserves all manner of game most rigorously on his estate. He objects to indiscriminate shooting, but he does not mind a sportsman, who does not murder does or slaughter animals out of season, letting off his gun once in a way. From the train you can see sometimes herds of wild pig at a distance, or a couple of black buck or ravine deer (gazelles) looking at you curiously and then capering off; hare, black partridges, wild duck, are plentiful enough. It was amusing to hear the drivers talking about their hunting exploits.

"Sometimes I see a 'are crouching behind a bush. I says, 'Pull up, Ram Chand' (the native stoker), 'give me my gun, there's a blessed kargosh' (hare). I gives him a charge or two. You shouldn't shoot an animal sittin'. But it was this like: I was movin' on the engine, and the 'are was sitting still; so it comes

to the same, I drove all the time as slowly as possible, I jumped down, got the 'are, and came back again."

The distance being great between the stations, the drivers can easily make up by putting on extra speed for these short halts; especially when out on trolleys working along the line, the men get chance shots at black partridges or rabbits. And sometimes they can pursue bigger game. They have been known, after working all day, to sit up, or rather to lie down on their stomachs, all night in a paddy-field, looking out for wild pig. Their expeditions were not always unsuccessful. When the work was slack, and an unexpected holiday fell to their lot, a couple of men would ride out to some neighbouring jil (small lake). If they had not got horses of their own, they would hire a mule or pony in the bazaar; the guns slung across their shoulders, their belt stuffed with cartridges, they would trot or gallop twelve or fifteen miles across the fields to the next sheet of water. They were sure to come across wild duck, widgeon, goose, or kunj (crane). One winter's day at Christmas-time two guns brought down no less than one hundred and twenty brace of duck.

The sheet of water was long and narrow; the ducks, though wild and scared, kept flying to and fro; and the guns, stationed at either end of the lake, got a right and left every few minutes.

A couple of brace were sent to every family in the station; and on the following, the Christmas Day, people were reminded by the plump duck, which appeared on their table instead of the tasteless native beef, or the unavoidable chicken, that they were in a country far different from merry England, yet one which had advantages of its own.

(To be continued.)

DOINGS FOR THE MONTH.

FEBRUARY.

THE RABBITRY.—Next month the Poultry Run will resume its place as the favourite fancy. We trust now that boys who keep rabbits will profit by our hints, and look better after their stock. A Professional Judge assures us that, if he had to choose one of the money-making fancies, he would adopt that of rabbits, both semi-wild and tame, in an outdoor warren and also sheltered court.

Well, we spoke last month about the hutches for out-of-door in summer and shed-shelter in winter. We said these should have a sloping roof, and handles for convenience of carrying. Ventilation may be secured by having square holes in each gable near the top, well sheltered from rain by the projecting eaves. These holes had better be covered with wire gauze or perforated zinc. The latter will last longest.

The hutch should stand on four short legs, and the hole in the partition, between the dark room and the cage portion, should be roomy enough to admit the largest rabbit, but not more.

About feeding. The plan of the average boy is to buy his rabbits first, then scratch his not-over-wise head, and wonder where he will keep them. This boy will never do well. The bright, kindly-hearted, thinking lad builds or buys his hutch first, and prepares house, and bedding, and food for his coming pets. He may even write out a plan for feeding and treating them, and nail it up somewhere, so as not to forget it. Something, for instance, like the following:

FEEDING RABBITS: RULES FOR.

1. Feed three times a day, or at least twice. If thrice, feed at 7 a.m., 2 p.m., and in the evening.

2. Feed at the same time daily.
3. Food to be clean, wholesome and free from dust or maggots.
4. Have sweet hay always in the rack, and now and then sweet, dry clover.
5. Put the day's oats in the trough every morning.
6. Have strong troughs, that will not be easily capsized, and with a lip turning in, to save the oats from being scattered.
7. Give some moist food in the morning also, bran mixed with crushed oats and water, or with oatmeal.
8. Green food for dinner, roots, etc.
9. Oats and a little mash at night.
10. Or dry bread-crusts for supper. Soaked peas occasionally.
11. No wet green food. No potatoes. No French beans.
12. Let the food be always sweet, and the dishes always clean, and give no green food that you are not sure of, lest it be poisonous. Give water, whether they drink it or not.

This present month is as good a time to begin keeping rabbits as any. But, we must repeat—make all preparations before you think of purchasing. Go on feeding well, and keep the bedding dry and clean.

THE POULTRY RUN.—Spring is now a measurable distance ahead of us; and what is nicer than spring chicken, or young roast duck and green peas? We told you in last month's DOINGS how and where to set your fowls. The place must be quiet, and not too warm. Food must be put down where the hen can see and find it, and water adjoining. The best

food is barley, maize, and oats. She will come off once a day to feed; if not, she had better be gently lifted off towards evening.

Ducks pay well if the eggs are set this month, and a good Dorking does as well as any other breed. If you have either ducklings or chickens already hatched it will not do to neglect them now. They must be fed from morning till night. It is at their earliest stage they put on most, comparatively; and, if ready to kill in May, they will fetch a good price.

Do not overcrowd your run or fowl-house. If you mean to go in for more stock, enlarge your ground. The grass run is an essential of success, and it is a good plan, where space is no object, and a paddock or orchard is at command, to use the portable fowl-house and run. We do not see why this could not be made cheaply enough. To purchase, it is expensive.

THE AVIARY.—Do not think of pairing yet, but get ready for so doing. It is well to think beforehand. If you mean sticking to your last year's type of canary you must now consider what birds you will match. See that they be strong, young, and lively. Many boys begin to pair far too soon. Thus weakness, sweating, paralysis, and all kinds of troubles, not to say vices, crop up in the aviary; and these distracted lads write to us to ask what on earth to do; but probably long before our answer can possibly reach them, their pretty favourites are no longer on earth, but under it.

If you mean to go in for new kinds, now is the time to buy, and be wary what you buy, and from whom you buy.

Foreign Birds.—Among these we class our own

finches and all other British birds that may be kept out of doors along with foreign ones about their own size. The fad or fancy is a delightful one, but expensive. Yet a boy might begin this month by making an outdoor aviary in a sheltered place; and then, by economy and good luck, he might succeed in time in filling it. We do not give many "monthly" hints about foreign birds, simply because so few take the hobby up, but we are always willing to give advice when requested.

THE PIGEON LOFT.—There is no safety in mating this month, but boys who have pigeon-lofts must have their ideas arranged, and know in advance what they mean to mate. Feed as usual, and keep all clean and dry. If there be any repairs needed, do them at once. Lay in your stock of grains, and see that they are clean and free from dust. Have hoppers, and fountains, and salt-cat all ready; and it will be as well to do a bit of whitewashing and disinfecting about the end of the month, being certain to choose a fine day.

If you have no hospital-pen, it would be a good plan now to make one. Any sizeable portable box would do, with a perch or two in it, and a door with a wired front.

THE BEE WORLD.—The feeding of bees wherever the stock is weak must be seen to. A syrup of barley-sugar is carefully made and used by bee-keepers. In fine weather artificial pollen is given; pea or rye flour is best. Continue to protect the bees from the weather—including the glare of snow—and from mice and birds, if these latter are inclined to commit depredations at the entrance to the hives. Wire-mesh is the best protection.

THE KENNEL.—In cold, frosty weather give extra bedding. The dog should be almost buried in it, and it should always be clean and sweet. Never let him go into a kennel wet. Be sure to feed well, and take care the dog's drop of water is not frozen.

THE KITCHEN GARDEN.—Continue to make war upon weeds. Buy your spring seeds—onions, radishes, carrots, parsnips, leeks, turnips, etc.; but, unless the weather be very dry and open indeed, do not be in a hurry yet to sow. They do little good in cold, moist ground. You may, however, get in your peas and broad beans. Potatoes may wait a week or two.

THE FLOWER AND WINDOW GARDEN.—Finish pruning. See to your roses, but beware of cutting back in frosty weather. Nail up wall-roses and fruit-trees. If you have a naked wall that you wish to see well covered in a single summer, get a bucketful of the long roots of the ordinary wild convolvulus, and lay them in a shallow, well-manured trench at the foot. Put them longways and continuous—plenty of them—and before June your wall will be a mass of green. You must, however, have strings for them to run up. These depend from a rope under the eave, and should be not more than ten inches apart. When the young green shoots come up, guide them on to the strings. They twine against the sun. Get your climbing seeds sown at once in your window-boxes, or, better, if you have a hotbed in the garden, raise them in that, and plant them out when big enough. Make trellis-work and hanging-baskets.

Correspondence.

SCIENTIFIC READER.—1. Advertise for the spawn at proper season in "Land and Water." 2. Try any naturalist or importer, such as Abrahams or Cross. 3. The maker of the incubator will send you a pamphlet.

NEMO.—On leaving school attend evening classes in connection with the Science and Art Department, and work up the subjects during the day.

RABBITS.—You must reckon the time from visit thirty or thirty-one days. Have dry, clean, warm bed made on twenty-seventh day.

EWOR.—Take one egg away from the pigeon's nest till the other is laid. Notice: the word added is not pronounced "haddled," nor spelt so either.

A. W. S.—You can get the Indian Chib articles by procuring our "Indoor Sports and Pastimes," about to be published in our "Boy's Own Bookshelf" series.

W. M. P. S. (Torquay).—The requirements in the competitions cannot be in any way altered to suit individuals.

T. MARTIN.—Do not attempt keeping a dozen birds in a cage indoors. It would want to be a very large aviary. Goldies, linnets, chaffins, and birds of that size, would do.

RED AND WHITE BLOTCHING-PAPER.—Do not take so ridiculous a tally again, please. Small grains of all kinds, milk and bread, and especially canary-seed, are the best foods for white mice. A chaffinch taken from the nest when ready to fly soon becomes a nice cage-bird. It wants no taming.

W. WHITE.—There is no mistake in the Perpetual Calendar (Vol. IX., p. 763) if you regard the *old* and *new* styles, for the 9th August, 1732, was on a *Wednesday* in England, Greece, Russia, and the Balkan States; but on a *Saturday* in the other European states. The key for September is 1.

DISTANT FRIENDS.—Here is an extract from a letter from Tuhikarama district, in the North Island of New Zealand: "We have had several entertainments at the schoolroom during the winter, at one of which we acted a piece from the B. O. P., called 'The Dentist's Den.' It passed off very well."

J. H.—We are hoping soon to bring out a popular handbook on all branches of gymnastics in our "Boy's Own Bookshelf" series.

J. T. G.—1. For blue fire take thirty parts each of sulphur, sulphate of potash, and ammonia sulphate of copper, fifty-four parts of nitre, and fifty-six parts of chlorate of potash. Or, mix ten parts of nitre with four parts of sulphur and two parts of metallic antimony. 2. For red fire mix seventeen parts of chlorate of potash, twenty-three parts of charcoal, ninety parts of sulphur, and 270 parts of nitrate of strontium. 3. For green fire mix seventy-seven parts of nitrate of barites, eight parts of chlorate of potash, three parts of charcoal, and thirteen parts of sulphur. But pray be careful.

TELEGRAPHIST.—Particulars as to joining the Royal Engineers will be sent you on application to Army Recruiting Department, Whitehall, S.W.

LLEWELLYN.—We know of no classes in London for teaching Welsh. You would find French or German of considerably more use to you than the native tongue you do not know, and it is just as unfortunate to be ignorant of them.

WANDA.—Yes. In draughts you can take a man, become a king, and take the next man all in the same move.

A. B.—It depends on the colours that are round it; but, as a general rule, use raw sienna for the flesh.

K. Q. Z.—1. It costs an average student at Oxford or Cambridge close on £300 in fees, board, lodging, and expenses, before he takes his B.A. degree. 2. At Keble College, Oxford, there is an annual charge of £82 to cover rent, board, tuition, and all necessary expenses except washing, light, and drink. 3. At Corpus Christi, Cambridge, the charges are £2 per quarter for bedmaker, £1 13s. 4d. for coals, £1 1s. 6d. for boots, £1 15s. for laundress, from £3 10s. to £3 10s. for rent, etc., £15 for steward, and £6 for tuition. 4. Una rig is the rig with one sail, the mast being stepped almost at the stem. 5. Back numbers, when obtained from us, are the same price as current numbers. When out of print we have nothing to do with them.

J. T. W. and M.—You can get a setting-box from Messrs. Cooke and Son, Museum Street, Oxford Street, W.

ESK M.—The adhesive stuff on luggage labels, etc., is gum-arabic and glycerine, the glycerine being in the proportion of half a dozen drops to a fluid ounce of gum solution.

RAMROD.—Newcastle-on-Tyne has enjoyed all the privileges of a distinct county since the reign of Henry IV. The privileges were gradually granted owing to the loyalty of the inhabitants to the winning side. William Rufus was practically the founder of the town, and it was always well in the royal favour.

A LOVER OF CRICKET.—In 1876 Mr. W. G. Grace made 2,622 runs in first-class matches, and his highest score in first-class matches was 344. In the same year, however, he made 400 in one innings; but this, with scores gained in other matches against odds, is not included in the 2,622.

LUCKY.—You can get dolls for Punch and Judy from Hanley's Noah's Ark in Holborn, or Cremer's toy-shop in Regent Street.

GAUTIER.—"Practical Canoeing" is published by Wilson, of 156, Minories. Its price is four shillings.

BATHS.—It may not hurt you to bathe in the winter if you are quick in getting into and out of your clothes, and do not wait about undressed. It is not when you are in the water, but during the time you delay on the bank, that you catch cold.

PORTLAND.—There is a book on the subject, "The Science and Art of the Manufacture of Portland Cement," by Henry Reid. Its price is eighteen shillings, and it is published by Messrs. E. and F. N. Spon, 125, Strand, London; and 35, Murray Street, New York.

SMOKE.—An excellent notion! We hope you will keep your promise never to touch tobacco unless you make it yourself out of the one plant you are so proud of. Grow your own tobacco, cure your own tobacco, and smoke your own tobacco; and then send us on the report from your medical attendant!

DEGREE.—Send for prospectus to Registrar, London University, Burlington Gardens, W.

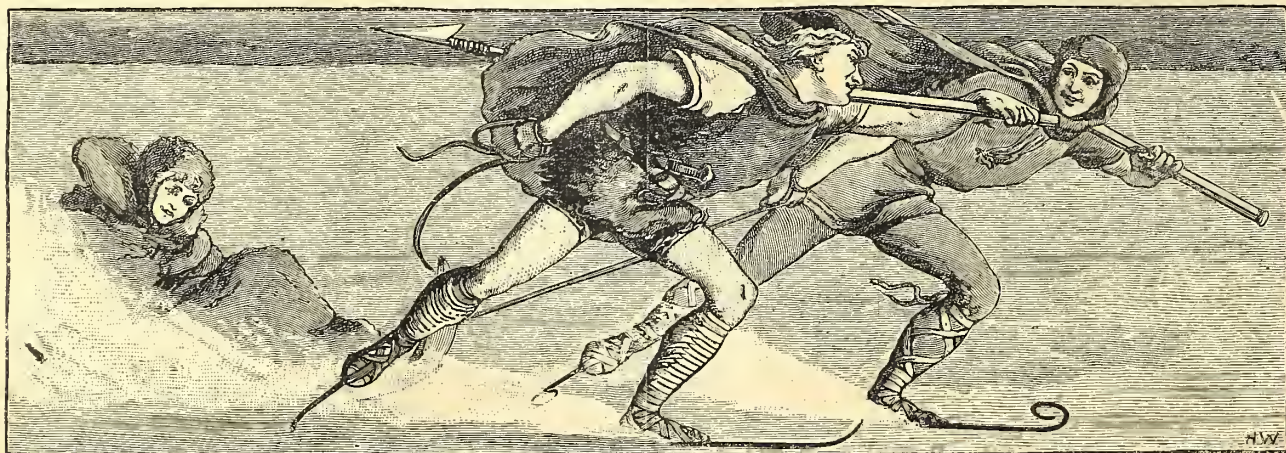
JACK.—The beanfeast is said to be a north-country term for the goose-feast, the bean-goose coming next in size to the grey-lag. It is thus akin to wayz-goose—the goose dinner eaten in common by the workmen of a firm once a year. It is also said to come from the cake with a bean in it, which conferred the presidency of the feast, on Twelfth Night principles, to the happy possessor of the slice with the bean in it.

MIDSHIPMAN FRANK.—You can get a shilling book, giving the masts, spars, ropes, and sails of a full-rigged ship from Mr. Wilson, of 156, Minories. Our complete plans were in the second volume.

J. B. PHILIP.—Messrs. Hachette, of King William Street, Strand, W.C., can supply you with the "Journal de la Jeunesse" and "Education et Recréation," which are two French periodicals for boys.

CECIL.—1. Candidates for examination as Assistant Clerks, R.N., must be between fifteen and seventeen years of age. 2. There is a medical examination. 3. The subjects of the ordinary examination are Dictation, Writing a Letter, French, Arithmetic, Geography, English History, Scripture, and three subjects out of Mathematics, Latin, German, Spanish, Italian, Elementary Physics, and Drawing.

ST. GEORGE.—We know of no book entirely on St. George. You will find the story in "The Seven Champions of Christendom," written by Richard Johnson in 1617, and there have been any number of editions, more or less condensed, and at all prices.



THE TEMPERANCE AND GENERAL Life Assurance Company.

HON. GEO. W. ROSS, } *President.* HON. S. H. BLAKE, Q.C. } *Vice-*
MINISTER OF EDUCATION, } ROBT. McLEAN, Esq. } *Presidents.*

GUARANTEE CAPITAL, \$100,000

Deposited with the Government, for Security of
Policy-Holders, \$50,000.

Purchase an Instalment Bond—THE BEST SECURITY IN THE
MARKET. Can be used as *Collateral* by Business Men. Gua-
rantee Cash Value on the face as incontestable as the Bond itself.
Insurance on the GRADUATED PREMIUM PLAN can be secu-
red for the largest amount at the least possible outlay. All other
desirable forms of Assurance furnished.

TOTAL ABSTAINERS !

BE ALIVE TO YOUR INTERESTS,

and insure in a Company where you will receive the full benefit of

Your Superior Mortality,

which the experience of the **United Kingdom Temperance
and General Provident Institution of Great Britain**
gives as **THIRTY PER CENT.** less mortality in your favour, and
FIFTY PER CENT. more profits.

The experience of the **Sceptre Life Insurance Com-
pany** for the last ten years, shows that the deaths in their Total
Abstinence Branch were **more than TWENTY-FIVE per
Cent. in favour of that Class** over moderate drinkers insured in
that Company.

The Manager of the **Whittington Life Assurance Company** of
England says that the death claims in six years had been
TWENTY-ONE and A HALF per THOUSAND in their
Temperance Branch against **FIFTY and A HALF per
THOUSAND** in their General Branch.

Send for Plans, etc.

AGENTS WANTED.

H. O'HARA,
Managing Director.

JAPANESE TEA GOWNS

- - - Very Rich! Very Rare! - - -
- Nothing Like Them in Canada! -

Also Rare Pieces of Old Embroideries. A Few Choice Sets of Old Bronze.
Old Porcelains. Collectors will like to see these.

RARE WEDDING AND BIRTHDAY PRESENTS

27
Front St. West } **Boyd's Japanese Warerooms**
TORONTO.



JOHNSTON'S FLUID BEEF

THE GREAT STRENGTH-GIVER

The claims of this preparation are made on the solid basis of facts. It contains all the nutritious and strength-giving elements that meat itself supplies.

FOR THE SICK.

There is no food that can be taken which will strengthen and invigorate as effectually. The weakest stomach can retain and digest it. It is

THE MOST PERFECT FORM OF CONCENTRATED FOOD AS A WINTER BEVERAGE.
It will be found to be

WARMING AND INVIGORATING.

A steaming hot cup of Johnston's Fluid Beef is the greatest heat generator that will supply lasting warmth and vigor.

GLORIOUS NEWS FOR THE SICK.

Sciatica, Indigestion, Rheumatism, Colds, and Neuralgia, are immediately relieved and permanently cured, or money refunded, by Norman's Electro Curative Belts, Insoles, &c. Consultation and catalogue free.

A. NORMAN, M.E.,
4 Queen St. East, Toronto.

CRYING BABIES.

Babies cry because they suffer. Their little gums are inflamed, and their bodies are more or less feverish. If you will tie around their necks one of NORMAN'S ELECTRIC TEETHING NECKLACES you will see a wonderful change for the better, their suffering will cease and their general health improve. Ask for Norman's, take no other, you will be pleased. Price, 50c.

A. NORMAN.

RUPTURE.)

Radical Cure Trusses. The very best in the world; all kinds. Come and see our immense stock, and be fitted with the one that will suit your case.

Satisfaction guaranteed, or money refunded.

A. NORMAN,
4 Queen St. East, Toronto.

GRATEFUL-COMFORTING.

EPPS'S (BREAKFAST) COCOA.



JAMES EPPS & CO.. Homœopathic Chemists.

Accident Insurance Company of North America, grants insurance or indemnity, payable in the event of accidental death or injury. Medland & Jones, General Agents, Toronto District, North-East Corner of Victoria and Adelaide Streets.